

Germ Cell Tumor - Childhood - Stages

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board](#) **[1]**, July / 2013

Stages

ON THIS PAGE: You will learn about how doctors describe a cancer's growth or spread. This is called the stage. To see other pages, use the menu on the side of your screen.

Staging is a way of describing where a tumor is located, if or where it has spread, and whether it is affecting other parts of the body. Doctors use diagnostic tests to determine the tumor's stage, so staging may not be complete until all of the tests are finished. Knowing the stage helps the doctor to decide what kind of treatment is best and can help predict a patient's prognosis (chance of recovery). There are different stage descriptions for different types of tumors.

According to the National Cancer Institute, the following stages are used for extracranial germ cell tumors:

Stage I: The tumor can be completely surgically removed, and it has not spread to other areas of the body.

Stage II: The tumor has spread to surrounding tissue or lymph nodes. Tumor cells may not be able to be completely removed from the surrounding tissue with surgery.

Stage III: The tumor has spread to surrounding tissue, has affected several lymph nodes, is found in fluid in the abdomen, and the entire tumor cannot be removed from the surrounding tissue with surgery.

Stage IV: The tumor has spread to other organs, most commonly the lungs, liver, or brain.

Recurrent: A recurrent tumor is one that has come back after treatment. It may recur at the original site of the tumor or in another place. If there is a recurrence, the tumor may need to be staged again (called re-staging) using the system above.

Information about the cancer's stage will help the doctor recommend a treatment plan. The next section helps explain the treatment options for this type of cancer. Use the menu on the side of your screen to select Treatment Options, or you can select another section, to continue reading this guide.

Links:

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/about-us>