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PDF generated on July 22, 2016 from <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/lacrimal-gland-tumor/overview>

[Lacrimal Gland Tumor - Overview](#) [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board](#) [2], 08/2015

ON THIS PAGE: You will find some basic information about this disease and the parts of the body it may affect. This is the first page of Cancer.Net's Guide to Lacrimal Gland Tumor. To see other pages, use the menu on the side of your screen. Think of that menu as a roadmap to this full guide.

What is a lacrimal gland tumor?

The lacrimal glands are the glands that secrete tears and are located above and to the side of the eye. When lacrimal gland cells change and grow uncontrollably, they form a mass called a tumor. A tumor can be cancerous or benign. A cancerous tumor is malignant, meaning it can grow and spread to other parts of the body. A benign tumor means the tumor can grow but will not spread.

Types of Lacrimal Gland Tumor

There are different types of tumors that can start in the lacrimal gland. It is important for the doctor to find out which type it is, since this will affect the treatment plan. Types include:

- **Benign mixed epithelial tumor.** A benign mixed epithelial tumor is a noncancerous tumor that does not spread to other parts of the body but will continue to grow if not treated. This type of tumor begins in the cells that line the lacrimal gland.
- **Malignant mixed epithelial tumor.** A malignant mixed epithelial tumor also begins in the cells that line the lacrimal gland. If it is not treated, it will spread to other parts of the

body.

- **Lymphoma.** Lymphoma can involve various structures of the eye. However, the conjunctiva and lacrimal glands are the most common. The conjunctiva is the mucous membrane lining the inner surfaces of the eyelids and the outer surface of the white of the eye. Most eye-related lymphoma is [non-Hodgkin lymphoma](#) [3], and may be associated with systemic (whole body) or central nervous system (brain and spinal cord) lymphoma.
- **Adenoid cystic carcinoma (AdCC) of the lacrimal gland.** [AdCC](#) [4] is a rare form of adenocarcinoma, which is a broad term covering any cancer arising from glandular tissues. An AdCC tumor is characterized by a distinctive pattern, in which bundles of epithelial cells surround and/or infiltrate ducts or glandular structures within an organ. When an AdCC tumor of the lacrimal gland grows, it commonly pushes the eye forward and causes it to bulge. This condition is called proptosis. Another characteristic is pain caused by the tumor affecting local nerves.

The [next section in this guide is Statistics](#) [5] and it helps explain how many people are diagnosed with this disease and general survival rates. Or, use the menu on the side of your screen to choose another section to continue reading this guide.

Links

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/lacrimal-gland-tumor/overview>

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

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/node/31269>

[4] <http://www.cancer.net/node/31342>

[5] <http://www.cancer.net/node/18984>