

## **Medulloblastoma - Childhood - Stages [1]**

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

**ON THIS PAGE:** You will learn about how doctors describe a tumor'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 the size of a tumor, where it is located, if it is cancerous or where it has spread, and whether it is affecting other parts of the body. Doctors use diagnostic tests to find out 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, which is the chance of recovery. There are different stage descriptions for different types of tumors.

Medulloblastoma in children is classified as either standard (average) risk or high risk, depending on the following factors:

- The child's age
- How much of the tumor remains after surgery
- Whether the tumor has spread

### **Standard-risk tumor**

The tumor is in the very back part of the brain and has not spread to other areas of the brain and spinal cord. Additionally, it is almost completely removed during surgery, meaning that less

than 1.5 cubic centimeters (cm) of the tumor remains after surgery. However, the surgeon will usually prefer to remove all of the tumor if it can be completely removed without increasing the risk of severe side effects. Standard risk tumors do not have molecular features that are linked with a worse chance of recovery.

## High-risk tumor

This type of tumor has either spread to other parts of the brain or the spine, or it has not spread but more than 1.5 cubic cm of tumor remains after surgery. Some tumors that first appear to be standard-risk tumors have high-risk molecular features and are treated as high-risk tumors with the current standard treatment plans (see next section).

## Recurrent tumor

A recurrent tumor is a tumor that has come back after treatment. It may recur in the brain, spine, spinal fluid or, very rarely, elsewhere in the body. If the tumor does return, there will be another round of tests to learn about the extent of the recurrence. These tests and scans are often similar to those done at the time of the original [diagnosis](#) [3].

*Information about the tumor's stage will help the doctor recommend a specific treatment plan. The [next section in this guide is Treatment Options](#) [4]. Or, use the menu on the side of your screen to choose another section to continue reading this guide.*

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### Links

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/medulloblastoma-childhood/stages>

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

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/medulloblastoma-childhood/diagnosis>

[4] <http://www.cancer.net/node/19244>