

## **Parathyroid Cancer - Stages** [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board](#) [2], 12/2014

**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 cancerous tumor is located, if or where it has spread, and whether it is affecting other parts of the body. Doctors use diagnostic tests to find out the cancer'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 cancer. For parathyroid cancer, the cancer is typically described as localized, metastatic, or recurrent.

**Localized.** This means the cancer is only found in the parathyroid gland and has not spread to nearby tissues or organs.

**Metastatic.** The cancer has spread to lymph nodes in the head and neck area or to other parts of the body, such as the lungs. Lymph nodes are small, bean-shaped organs that help fight infection. Parathyroid cancer rarely spreads to lymph nodes.

**Recurrent.** Recurrent cancer is cancer that has come back after treatment. It may come back in the original location or in another part of the body. If there is a recurrence, the cancer may need to be staged again in a process called re-staging.

*Source: National Cancer Institute.*

*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 tumor. Use the menu on the side of your screen to select Treatment Options, or you can select another section, to continue reading this guide.*

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### **Links:**

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

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