



Help Us, Help Doctors, Help Kids

Brain Tumor Facts

Pediatric brain tumors are the #1 cancer-related cause of death in children 20 and under.

- In the year 2000 more than 26,000 children in the U.S. were living with the diagnosis of a primary central nervous system tumor. Each year 3,200 new cases are diagnosed.(1)
- Every nine days a child in the U.S. is diagnosed with a brain tumor.
- Brain tumors are the leading cause of cancer death from childhood cancer, accounting for 24 percent of cancer-related deaths in 1997 among persons up to 19.(2)
- 76 percent of children diagnosed with a brain tumor are younger than 15.
- There are more than 120 different types of brain tumors, making effective treatment very complicated.
- Pediatric brain tumors are different from those in adults and are often treated differently.
- The combined five-year survival rates for childhood brain tumors has increased slowly, from 54 percent to approximately 60 percent.(3) However, for some pediatric brain tumors (e.g., brain stem gliomas, atypical teritoid/rhabdoid and glioblastoma multifome), long-term survival rates remain below 20 percent.
- Because brain tumors are located at the control center for thought, emotion and movement, their effects on a child's physical and cognitive abilities can be devastating.
- Quality of life for survivors of pediatric brain tumors is influenced by the long-term side effects of treatments such as chemotherapy and radiation.
- Some brain tumor survivors require physical, cognitive and rehabilitation services to allow them to return to tasks of everyday life.
- Unlike other benign tumors, benign brain tumors may recur and may result in death.
- Brain tumors are treated by surgery, radiation therapy and chemotherapy, used either individually or in combination.
- Enhancing the quality of life of children with brain tumors requires access to quality specialty care and ready availability of follow-up care and rehabilitative services.
- Improving the outlook for children with brain tumors requires research into the causes of and better treatments for brain tumors.

1. Central Brain Tumor Registry of the United States (CBTRUS) report, Primary Brain Tumors in the United States, 2004-2005.

2. Report of the Brain Tumor Progress Review Group; published in 2000 by the National Cancer Institute and the National Institute for Neurological Diseases and Stroke.

3. "Oncology," medical journal of the National Cancer Institute, March 1998.

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