

What is Osteosarcoma?

Most osteosarcomas occur in children, teens and young adults between 10 and 30.

1 Introduction

Osteosarcoma is a type of bone cancer that usually develops in the osteoblast cells that form bones. This is the most common type of cancer that starts in the bones. These cancer cells may appear to be regular bone cells, but they develop into tumors that create immature, irregular and diseased bone. Osteosarcoma can develop in any bone, but is most common in the long bones around the knee or upper arm where bones are growing quickly. Due to this, osteosarcoma tends to occur in children and young adults with rapidly growing bones.

2 Causes

Osteosarcoma is thought to be caused by DNA mutations inside bone cells — either inherited or acquired after birth. Some risk factors that may increase the risk of developing this cancer are:

- Teenage growth spurts
- Gender
- Exposure to radiation
- Genetic factors
- Certain bone diseases

3 Symptoms

Pain in the affected bone is the most common symptom of osteosarcoma. While it may come and go at first, the pain will become constant over time. Other common symptoms include:

- Swelling around the affected site
- Increased pain with activity or lifting
- A warm mass or lump that can be felt through the skin
- Limited or decreased movement
- Unexplained fever
- Easily broken bone

4 Treatments

Many cases of osteosarcoma are treated with a combination of chemotherapy and surgery, followed by more chemotherapy to reduce the chances of it coming back. Treatment options may vary depending on a number of factors including:

- Location of the osteosarcoma
- Size of the tumor
- Type and grade of the osteosarcoma
- Spread of the tumor

Did you know?

Osteosarcoma accounts for about 3% of cancers that happen in children.

For more information on osteosarcoma and supportive resources, please visit www.cancer.org

References:

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/osteosarcoma>

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/sarcoma>

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/15041-osteosarcoma#symptoms-and-causes>

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/cancer-osteosarcoma.html>

<https://orthoinfo.aaos.org/en/diseases--conditions/osteosarcoma>