

SOFT TISSUE SARCOMA

Sarcomas are More Common in Children and Make-up 15% of All Childhood Cancers

Each Year About 14,000 people in the United States are Diagnosed With Sarcoma, Representing Just 1% of All New Cancer Cases

Soft tissue sarcoma is a rare but serious form of cancer that should be treated as quickly as possible to prevent serious long term injury or illness. Sarcoma's can lead to other serious conditions that can be life threatening.

Please use this guide as a resource for knowledge and understanding of soft tissue sarcoma causes, symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment.

01 | Cause

It is unknown exactly what causes most cases of soft tissue sarcoma; however some risk factors have shown greater chances of developing these cancers. As with many cancers family history and lifestyle can play a part in developing cancer. Genetic mutations, defects and environmental risk factors are typical causes for cancer. Patients with no apparent risk factors that suffer from sarcoma are often left with no answers and frustration over their diagnosis.

02 | Symptoms

More than half of sarcomas begin in an arm or leg, twenty percent begin in the abdomen/stomach area, ten percent outside the chest or abdomen and about ten percent in the head or neck area. Some patients may begin to see or feel lumps growing over time and may or may not be painful. Sometimes the sarcoma will cause other side effects due to its location or size. If you have any of the following symptoms, seek care:

- A new lump or a lump that is growing (anywhere on your body)
- Abdominal pain that is getting worse
- Blood in your stool or vomit
- Black, tarry stools (when bleeding happens in the stomach or bowels, the blood can turn black as it is digested, and it may make the stool very black and sticky)

03 | Diagnosis

After a physical examination, review of patient history, symptoms and concerns your provider will likely order one or more of the following test in order to properly diagnose cancer. Image testing from x-rays, CT scans, MRI's, Pet scans or ultrasounds will help locate, measure, and visually see the tumor itself. Biopsies by fine needle aspiration or core needles may be necessary to grade the tumor and to determine all the traits of the tumor. After a biopsy the samples can be ran through multiple tests to properly confirm the condition of the tumor as to better examine possible treatment options.

04 | Treatment

After a sarcoma is found and staged, your provider will provide all treatment options and recommendations. Getting a second opinion may be ideal in order to make sure you are receiving information about all your options. When choosing a course of action for treatment it is important to be realistic and understanding of all factors related to the condition and outcome of treatment. The main types of treatment are:

- Surgery
- Radiation
- Chemotherapy
- Targeted therapy

Additional information on treatment options and soft tissue sarcoma's are available, please visit:

<http://www.cancer.org>

*Did You Know?
Sarcomas are malignant tumors*

References

<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/soft-tissue-sarcoma.html>

<http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/sarcoma-soft-tissue/introduction>