

# Primary Brain and Central Nervous System Cancer



- **Primary brain cancers:**
  - are masses of abnormal cells that have grown out of control.
  - begin in the brain or near the brain.
  - usually grow rapidly and may spread within the brain and spine. (Mayo Clinic)
  
- **Causes of primary brain cancer**
  - No one knows the exact cause of brain cancer. Most cancerous brain tumors happen for no apparent reason.
  - Some factors that may increase your risk of getting brain cancer are:
    - Being male – in general brain tumors are more common in males than females.
    - Being white – brain tumors occur more often in whites than in other races.
    - Your age – your risk of a brain tumor increases as you age.
    - Exposure to radiation – people who received radiation to treat cancer are more likely to develop brain tumors.
    - Workers exposed on their jobs to vinyl chloride, formaldehyde and acrylonitrile are more likely to develop brain tumors.
    - Family history of brain tumors (National Cancer Institute)
  
- **Facts about primary brain and central nervous system (spinal column) cancer in the United States**
  - Brain and central nervous system cancers are reported together. The following information is for both brain and central nervous system cancer.
  - More than 81,000 people were living with brain cancer in 2000.
  - In 2005 6.4 people in 100,000 were diagnosed with brain and central nervous system cancers. (Surveillance Epidemiology and End Results [SEER], National Cancer Institute and the National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC])
  - It is estimated that 21,810 new brain and central nervous system cancers will be diagnosed during 2008. (Central Brain Tumor Registry of the United States [CBTRUS]).
  
- **For more information:**
  - Belinda Heimericks, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services Cancer Inquiry Program, at (573) 522-2841. Information is also available at the following web site: [www.dhss.mo.gov/CancerInquiry](http://www.dhss.mo.gov/CancerInquiry).
  - Sue Casteel, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) at (913) 551-1312.
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