

Spinal tumor treatment

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The number of [spinal](#) tumors requiring surgical treatment has been increasing during recent decades. Likewise a progressive demand for complex techniques as en bloc spondylectomies and sacrectomies evolved.

Surgery

see [Spinal tumor surgery](#).

Radiation therapy. This may be used to eliminate the remnants of tumors that remain after surgery, to treat inoperable tumors or to treat those tumors where surgery is too risky.

Medications may help ease some of the side effects of radiation, such as nausea and vomiting.

Sometimes, your radiation therapy regimen may be adjusted to help minimize the amount of healthy tissue that's damaged and to make the treatment more effective. Modifications may range from simply changing the dosage of radiation to using sophisticated techniques such as 3-D conformal radiation therapy.

Chemotherapy. A standard treatment for many types of cancer, chemotherapy uses medications to destroy cancer cells or stop them from growing. Your doctor can determine whether chemotherapy might be beneficial for you, either alone or in combination with radiation therapy.

Side effects may include fatigue, nausea, vomiting, increased risk of infection and hair loss.

Other drugs. Because surgery and radiation therapy as well as tumors themselves can cause inflammation inside the spinal cord, doctors sometimes prescribe corticosteroids to reduce the swelling, either after surgery or during radiation treatments.

Although corticosteroids reduce inflammation, they are usually used only for short periods to avoid serious side effects such as muscle weakness, osteoporosis, high blood pressure, diabetes and an increased susceptibility to infection.

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