



**braintumour**  
foundation  
OF CANADA

For additional Information Sheets or to learn more about other brain tumour topics, visit [www.BrainTumour.ca](http://www.BrainTumour.ca)

Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada Information Sheets are provided as an informational and educational tool and are not intended to replace the advice or instruction of a professional healthcare practitioner, or to substitute for medical care. We urge you to seek specific medical advice on individual matters of concern.

Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada is generously supported by individuals, corporations and employee groups. It is through the tireless dedication of donors that help is available for anyone affected by a brain tumour, including patients, survivors and their loved ones.

# Brain Tumour Types Info Sheet

## Chordoma

### Overview:

*Tumour Group:*  
Non-Malignant Brain Tumours

*WHO Grade:*  
The World Health Organization does not assign a grade to chordomas

*Typical Age Range:*  
Most common in younger and middle-aged adults.

### Description of Tumour:

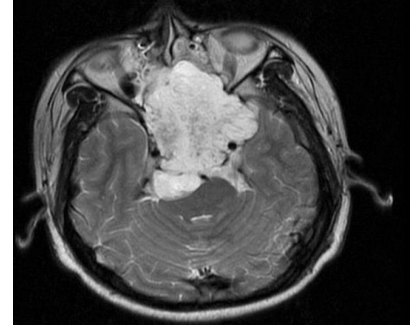
Chordomas are usually slow-growing, locally invasive tumours occurring at the base of the skull or at the end of the spine. They affect the adjacent cranial nerves and brainstem.

- Originates from cells left over from early fetal development
- Invades the bone and soft tissues, and sometimes involves the brain and cranial nerves
- Can block the ventricles, causing hydrocephalus (water in the brain)
- Can metastasize (spread) or recur.

### Symptoms:

Common symptoms include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Double vision
- Headaches.



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you are **not** alone

## Additional support, information and education offered by Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada:

Adult, Pediatric and Non-Malignant Brain Tumour Handbooks available in English and French.

“A Friend in Hope” children’s storybook available in English and French.

20+ Adult Support Groups across Canada (in-person and virtual)

Toll-free information and support line

BrainWAVE Pediatric Support Program

Print BrainStorm Newsletter  
Email Newsletters:  
• E-BrainStorm  
• Peace of Mind

“Grey Matters” Blog

All patient resources are available free-of-charge in Canada. Call 1-800-265-5106 or visit [www.BrainTumour.ca](http://www.BrainTumour.ca) for additional details and information.

## Treatment/Standard of Care:

It is generally agreed that the optimal treatment for most skull-base chordomas is maximal surgical removal followed by focused radiation therapy. Skull-base chordomas are difficult tumours to remove, and it is important that patients are referred to neurosurgeons with particular expertise in skull-base chordomas. Some chordomas may also be amenable to resection via endoscopic surgery through the nasal cavities.

There are many types of radiation therapy possible for chordomas, including proton beam, linac radiotherapy, IMRT, gamma knife, carbon ion and others. In rare cases, chemotherapy may also be recommended as part of the treatment plan.

## Prognosis:

Chordomas that are considered Grade I tend to have the most favourable survival rates compared to other higher grade brain tumours. Maximal safe removal, often combined with focused radiation therapy, can confer long-term survival in many patients. However lifelong surveillance of a chordoma is often required because recurrences are possible even years after initial diagnosis and treatment.

**For more details, please refer to [braintumour.ca](http://braintumour.ca).**



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