

Fibrosarcoma

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EDITORIAL NOTE

Fibrosarcoma is a rare kind of cancer that affects fibroblast cells. Fibrosarcomas are cancers of the fibroblasts, which produce collagenous connective tissue but not bone or cartilage directly. Fibroblasts are the cells that make up the fibrous tissue that covers the entire body. Fibrous tissue makes up tendons, which connect muscles to bones. The body's fibroblasts lose control and multiply excessively when fibrosarcoma hits. This results in the formation of fibrous tissue in places where it isn't supposed to be or in excessive amounts. Fibrosarcoma, like other tumours, can spread throughout the body.

Central fibrosarcomas grow more slowly than osteosarcomas, are associated with less creation of reactive new bone, are slower to metastasize, and produce a smaller tissue mass. Fibrosarcomas are gray-white tumours that occupy part of the medullary cavity and replace cancellous and cortical bone on a macroscopic level. Myxofibrosarcomas are fibrosarcomas that have developed a myxoid alteration (see later discussion). Necrosis is frequently seen, indicating a high-grade (grade 3) fibrosarcoma. IHC should show that fibrosarcomas lack expression of almost all markers except vimentin. Fibrosarcoma affects both men and women equally. Tumors can affect people of any age, although they are most frequent in those in their third and sixth decades. In elderly patients, fibrosarcoma is frequently assumed to be the result of a previous benign disease, such as an enchondroma (benign cartilage tumour), unusual parosteal osteochondromatous growth, or chronic osteomyelitis etc.

SYMPTOMS OF FIBROSARCOMA

- Prolonged discomfort in the tumour location that may feel like a sprain or "growing pains"
- Swelling surrounding the bone, which is typically not seen until the tumour has grown fairly large
- A joint or limb that is difficult to move

- Because the tumour is pressing on nerves, there is numbness in certain parts of the body
- Because the bone has been weakened by cancer, it is frail and readily shattered
- Swelling in various regions of the body, particularly the limbs, that is painless or painful, a cough or shortness of breath
- Vaginal pain in the abdomen causes dark stools, vomiting blood, and irregular bleeding

CAUSE AND RISK FACTORS

- Some cancer syndromes caused by inherited genetic abnormalities weakened or damaged lymph system
- Various chemical exposures, probably including vinyl chloride, arsenic, and dioxin
- Some cancer syndromes caused by inherited genetic abnormalities

TREATMENT FOR FIBROSARCOMA

Surgery: Surgery to remove the primary tumour, with wide margins around the tumour (removal of some normal tissue) to ensure that the entire tumour is eliminated, is the major treatment for fibrosarcoma. If the tumour is located in a limb, it may be necessary to remove some bone and replace it with a prosthesis or a bone graft. **Radiation:** Radiation is a targeted therapy that uses high-energy X-rays to kill or slow the growth of cancer cells. It can be used to aid in tumour shrinkage prior to surgery (neoadjuvant therapy). It can also be administered after surgery to destroy any cancer cells that may have been left behind (adjuvant treatment). **Chemotherapy:** Chemotherapy is a systemic treatment, which means it kills cancer cells no matter where they've spread. If your cancer has progressed to your lymph nodes or beyond, it may be advised. It can be used before or after surgery, just like radiotherapy.

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