



Bone Cancer Facts and Figures

- In the UK up to 6 teenagers or young adults (aged between 13 and 24) will be diagnosed with cancer each day (approximately 2,100 cases each year)¹
- Cure rates for children are higher than for most adults cancers and over 70% of children will be long term survivors²
- However cancer is the most common cause of death in young people after accidents¹
- The two main types of bone cancer affecting children and young people are osteosarcoma and Ewing's sarcoma³
- Both of these cancers most commonly occur between the ages of 10 and 25³
- Around 400 patients are diagnosed each year in the UK with primary bone cancers³
- It is thought that bone cancers in young people may be associated with rapid bone growth, such a "growth spurts" in adolescents
- Osteosarcoma can develop in any bone and sometimes in the tissue surrounding bones. It most commonly affects males between 10 and 25 years old, but can less commonly affect older adults. It often occurs in the long bones of the arms and legs at areas of rapid growth around the knees and shoulders of children⁴
- Ewing's sarcoma is a specific type of bone cancer that most commonly starts in the pelvis or legs. It is the most aggressive bone tumour and affects younger people between 4-15 years of age. It is more common in males and is very rare in people over 30 years old⁴
- A study funded by the Bone Cancer Research Trust published in 2009 shows that the survival of children and young adults with bone cancer in the UK has not improved for 20 years⁴
- On average a young person cured of bone cancer would have another 60 years of life³
- The most common symptom of bone cancer is pain, which is caused either by the spread of the tumour or by the breaking of bone that is weakened by a tumour. Stiffness or tenderness in the bone may also occur⁶
- Bone cancers are diagnosed by X-rays, bone and MRI scans
- Bone cancer is treated using a combination of therapies including surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy.

References:

1. <https://www.teenagecancertrust.org/about/about.php#facts> (last accessed 15th June 2009)
2. <http://www.cancerbackup.org.uk/Cancertype/Childrenscancers/General/Childrenscancers>. (last accessed 15th June 2009)
3. Quoted in the Bone Cancer Research Trust press release "Bone Cancer Research Trust calls for new treatments for bone cancer (issued 18th June 2009)
4. http://www.medicinenet.com/bone_cancer/page2.htm (last accessed 15th June 2009)
5. Incidence and survival of childhood bone cancer in northern England and the West Midlands, 1981–2002. Eyre et al. British Journal of Cancer. Volume 100, Issue 1. January, 2009
6. <http://www.mskcc.org/mskcc/html/1365.cfm> (last accessed 15th June 2009)