

DO YOU KNOW THE SYMPTOMS OF PRIMARY BONE CANCER?

76% OF PRIMARY BONE CANCER CASES IN THE UK ARE CURRENTLY BEING MISDIAGNOSED. ONLY 17% OF PATIENTS ARE BEING REFERRED BY THEIR GPs


Primary bone cancers often present with vague symptoms, resembling non-urgent conditions such as growing pains or arthritis. Some symptoms may come and go, others may be constant. Asking your patient to explain all the symptoms experienced, including systemic ones is key to ruling out primary bone cancer.

A timely referral and diagnosis can save lives. On average, **18% of patients referred to a specialist Bone Cancer Centre by a GP are metastatic at diagnosis, compared to 41% of patients referred by A&E.**


IT IS THE COMBINATION OF SEVERAL VAGUE SYMPTOMS THAT CAN IDENTIFY PRIMARY BONE CANCER AS A DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS AND LEAD TO A TIMELY REFERRAL

YOU CAN MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT IF YOU SPOT THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS:

BONE PAIN

- Constant or intermittent
- Worse at night 
- Intensify with time
- Resistant to analgesia
- Worsened by massage

LUMP

- Atypical bony or soft tissue swelling or mass 
- Inflammation or tenderness
- Hot to the touch

OTHER SYMPTOMS

- Pathological fractures 
- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Eye and vision issues
- Fever
- Weight-loss
- Easy bruising

 NICE Guidelines Red Flag Symptom

MOBILITY

- Unexplained limp
- Change in gait
- Reduced ROM
- Stiffness in a joint
- Reluctance to do normal activities
- Unable to walk
- Numbness and loss of strength in limbs
- Issues with balance

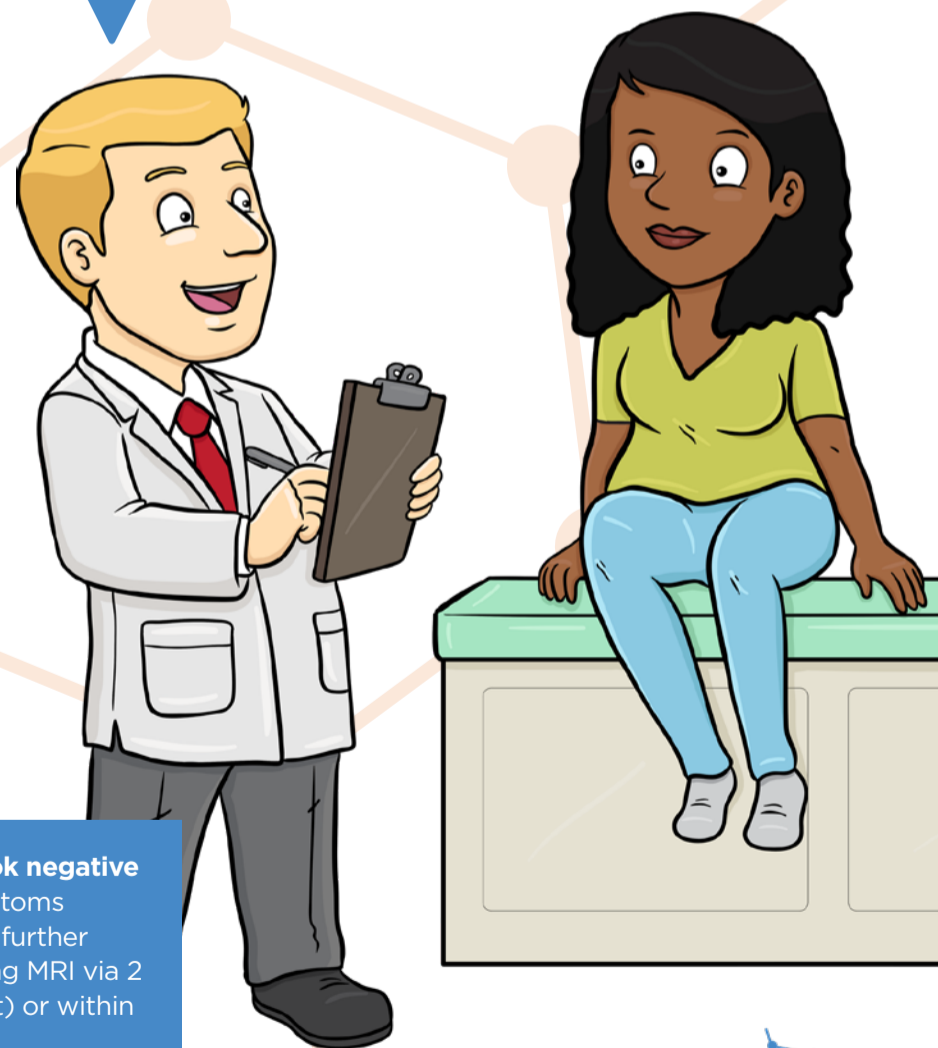
“Tell me more about the quality of the pain and any other symptoms”

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT A PRIMARY BONE CANCER:

Refer for Plain X-ray via 2 week wait (adult) or within 48 hours (child).

If the results look indicative or suspicious for primary bone cancer: Refer directly to a specialist Bone Cancer Centre. For details on these, visit bcrct.org.uk/awareness

If the results look negative or clear: If symptoms persist, refer for further imaging including MRI via 2 week wait (adult) or within 48 hours (child)



BONE CANCER AWARENESS INITIATIVE

SAVING LIVES THROUGH EARLIER DIAGNOSIS

A BONE CANCER RESEARCH TRUST & CHILDREN WITH CANCER UK PROJECT