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Gliomatosis Cerebri

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Synonyms

[Diffuse cerebral gliomatosis](#); [Infiltrative diffuse astrocytosis](#)

Definition

Gliomatosis cerebri is a rare type of aggressive, malignant tumor of astrocytic origin that is characterized by individual cells that diffusely infiltrate the brain with poorly circumscribed boundaries. It affects both white and gray matter in the cerebrum and can also occur in the cerebellum, brain stem, and spinal cord. It often arises in adults in their 30s or 40s and is very resistant to treatment. Gliomatosis cerebri can be difficult to distinguish from other highly aggressive tumors such as glioblastoma multiforme. Personality and mental status changes are commonly seen, particularly early on in the disease. Symptoms of raised intracranial pressure such as headaches and

vomiting may be present. Other symptoms can include lethargy, seizures, visual disturbance, dementia, motor symptoms, and endocrine abnormalities. Prognosis is generally unfavorable with a relatively short survival time. Surgical intervention is usually not an option with this type of tumor, and aggressive chemotherapy or radiotherapy has not been shown to dramatically affect survival rates.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Astrocytoma](#)
- ▶ [Brain Tumor](#)
- ▶ [Glioblastoma Multiforme](#)
- ▶ [Neoplasms](#)
- ▶ [Tumor Grade](#)

References and Readings

Herrlinger, U., Felsberg, J., Küker, W., Bornemann, A., Plasswilm, L., Knobbe, C. B., Strik, H., Wick, W., Meyermann, R., Dichgans, J., Bamberg, M., Reifenberger, G., & Weller, M. (2002). Gliomatosis cerebri: Molecular pathology and clinical course. *Annals of Neurology*, 52(4), 390–399.