

# CLINICAL REFERRAL GUIDELINES FOR ADULT PERSONAL DOCTORS

## BRAIN AND CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM (CNS) TUMOURS

Very urgent referral to a Neurologist or an A & E Department (within 48 hours) in children and young adults with

- Newly emergent neurological and brain dysfunctions.
- Rapid deterioration of subacute focal neurological deficiency, unexplained behavioural change and the appearance of sluggishness or a combination of the above.
- Unexplained personality change confirmed by witnesses even in the absence of clinical symptoms suggestive of a brain tumour.

Urgent referral to a Neurologist for evaluation and access to magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) (appointment within 2 weeks) in adults with loss of central neurological functions.

- Seizure
- Strong unexplained headache
- Mental disorders
- Cranial nerve paralysis
- Headache accompanied by symptoms suggestive of increased endocranial pressure such as for example
  - Nausea
  - Somnolence

### CAUTION:

- A normal test result does not rule out the need for monitoring or further investigation.
- Furthermore, a normal MRI examination may lead to false reassurance in cases where specific pathological findings are not detected on MRI.
- Approximately 10% of the population, for various reasons, is unable to undergo MRI (e.g. due to a pacemaker or claustrophobia). An alternative option is a CT scan with increased radiation exposure.

Extremely urgent referral to a Neurologist (within 24 hours) of patients with malignant spinal cord compression. This is a rare (3-5% of cancer patients) but very serious condition that leads to paralysis and requires immediate treatment (surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy).

### NOTE:

1. For patients diagnosed with cancer undergoing oncological treatment or follow-up, communication with the treating oncologist is recommended.
2. Patients undergoing oncological treatment or follow-up (at least one visit to the oncologist within 8 months) have the right to direct access to the treating oncologist.

**Bibliography:**

1. Rapid Referral Guidelines for Suspected Cancer. A NICE-endorsed summary of the guidelines for suspected cancer (NG12). MacMillan Cancer Support.  
<https://www.macmillan.org.uk/healthcare-professionals/cancer-pathways/prevention-and-diagnosis/rapid-referral-guidelines>
2. Malignant spinal cord compression (MSCC). MacMillan Cancer Support.  
[https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/impacts-of-cancer/malignant-spinal-cord-compression#:~:text=we%20can%20help-,What%20is%20malignant%20spinal%20cord%20compression%20\(MSCC\)%3F,it%20can%20be%20very%20serious.](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/impacts-of-cancer/malignant-spinal-cord-compression#:~:text=we%20can%20help-,What%20is%20malignant%20spinal%20cord%20compression%20(MSCC)%3F,it%20can%20be%20very%20serious.)