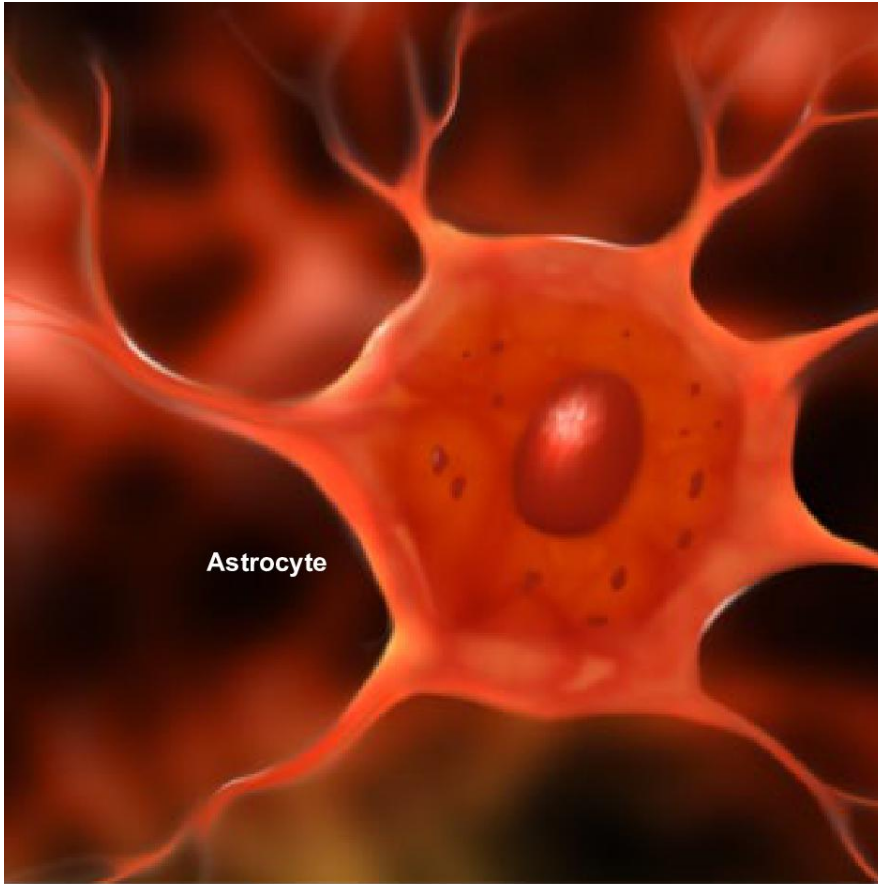




## Astrocytoma



Astrocyte



### Overview

This is a tumor that begins in a brain cell called an "astrocyte." These cells help give your brain its structure. An astrocytoma can form in your brain, in your brain stem or in your spinal cord. There are many types of astrocytomas. They can be cancerous or noncancerous. They can grow slowly or quickly. A doctor can figure out the specific type you have.

### How a Tumor Forms

Tumors start with a problem in a cell's DNA. These are the blueprints that tell cells how to grow and what to do. The DNA problem makes the cell multiply out of control. An astrocytoma tumor is a lump of these bad cells.

### Causes

We don't know exactly what causes an astrocytoma. It may be linked to DNA passed down from your parents. A virus can damage your DNA. And something where you work or live may cause the problem.

### Symptoms

A growing astrocytoma can press against your brain. It can change the way your brain works. You may have headaches and seizures. You may lose your memory, and you may act differently. You may have other problems, depending on the size and location of your tumor.

### Treatment

Treatment depends on your tumor and your needs. You may benefit from surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, or other options. Your healthcare provider will create a care plan that is right for your needs.