

New guidelines for treating the complications of brain tumors

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The brain can be affected by a number of different types of tumor and this leads to serious complications such as epileptic attacks, brain edema, hemorrhage, or thrombosis. Hitherto, there have been no uniform standards available for the diagnosis and treatment of these common symptoms. An international team of researchers comprising experts

from the leading oncology societies ESMO (European Society for Medical Oncology) and EANO (European Association of Neuro-Oncology) has now compiled international guidelines and standards for the treatment of these complications, and these have been published in *Annals of Oncology*. As EANO President, Matthias Preusser, Head of the Division of Oncology (MedUni Vienna's Department of Medicine I) initiated these international guidelines and has played a leading role in coordinating them in his capacity as last author.

"Every year, around 18 million people worldwide are diagnosed with [cancer](#) and up to every second patient with an advanced tumor develops [brain](#) metastases, especially in cases of lung, breast or skin cancer. Due to the breadth of this field, the new guidelines are of huge significance," explains Preusser. "Two of the largest societies have therefore joined forces to produce uniform standards."

With the aid of algorithms and numerous diagrams, a reference work has been produced to ensure that patients throughout the world receive high-quality treatment for the complications associated with brain tumors. Questions such as "how does one manage brain edema?" or "what should I do in the event of an epileptic attack or neurocognitive impairment?" are addressed in detail by the interdisciplinary panel of authors.

"The [new guidelines](#) that we have compiled can be applied and implemented all over the world and should therefore lead to a significant increase in patient safety," stresses Preusser, who co-authored guidelines for the correct treatment of glioma (a specific type of central nervous system brain tumor).

Every year, cancer is responsible for around 25% of all deaths in Austria. Around 40,000 new cases are diagnosed each year. The commonest cancers in women are breast cancer (29%), lung and bowel cancer (10% each). For men it is prostate cancer (23%), followed by

lung cancer (14%) and then bowel cancer (12%). There has been a significant increase in relative 5-year survival over the last few decades and it now stands at around 60%.

More information: P. Roth et al. Neurological and vascular complications of primary and secondary brain tumors: EANO-ESMO Clinical Practice Guidelines for prophylaxis, diagnosis, treatment and follow-up, *Annals of Oncology* (2020). [DOI: 10.1016/j.annonc.2020.11.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annonc.2020.11.003)

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