Osteosarcoma, one of the most common types of bone cancers that occur in young kids is Pediatric osteosarcoma. This condition also affects young adults between 10 to 25 years of age. The age of 15 is when this condition can peak since the long bones in the body are going through a major spurt in growth. Such cases of osteosarcoma are found to be equal between boys and girls till about the age of 13. Post this; there is a marked increase in male cases. About 400 new cases of this sarcoma are seen annually in the United States.

About 5-6% of childhood tumors are bone cancers and more than half of these cases are osteosarcoma related. This is 4th among the common childhood cancers, the others being lymphoma, leukemia, and brain tumors respectively. Another called Ewing's sarcoma is also a common childhood cancer which accounts for about 34%. Demographic statistics indicate the prevalence of Osteosarcoma is only slightly more in whites than in blacks. However the incidence of Ewing's sarcoma is much higher amongst white folks – the numbers being six times higher than blacks.

Evidence suggests that there are multiple causes for osteosarcoma. A few well defined associations and risk factors do exist. For instance, those people who have the Li-Fraumeni syndrome (a rare inherited disorder) face a higher than usual risk of contracting cancers (including osteosarcoma). This seems to suggest a genetic connection to this cancer. Similarly children suffering from a condition like retinoblastoma (a rare tumor of the eye) stand to face a higher risk against osteosarcoma. The mutation of the RB1 gene is considered to be the primary factor in both conditions.

Rapid bone growth is also considered a key factor in the development of this disease given that its occurrence usually takes place in those areas of bone which divide rapidly (i.e. areas closest to the ‘physes’ or ‘growth plates’). More than 90 percent of osteosarcomas is present in the long bones at their growing ends. Within that, about 80 percent occur around the knee at the tibia (upper end) or at the femur (lower end). The humerus (upper arm bone that is nearest the shoulder) is also another area which is prone to get affected. Other sites of occurrence are the pelvis, clavicle, rib along with the flat bones found in the skull and face, although these tumors are slightly different from other osteosarcomas. Survival rates for tumors of the craniofacial or other flat bones after a complete removal of the involved bone are very good. However the nature of the surgery itself can be difficult and disfiguring because of the location of the tumors.

Typical osteosarcoma symptoms are pain (there may or may not be swelling) in the long bones. Affected area may possibly feel heated. In several cases the osteosarcoma has been discovered when the child in question has an injury to the area. The tumor of course has not been caused by the injury (an erroneous assumption in the past) but it does bring the problem into focus. An unexplained or persistent limp in a child can also be a sign of a possible tumor. There might be a reduced ability in moving the joint in question.

It must be kept in mind that all osteosarcomas don't necessarily develop as solitary lesions within the long bones. There can be multiple sites of malignancy, or the disease can start as a solitary lesion after which it spreads within a few months of the initial examination. Pain is the chief indicator/symptom of this disease especially when that pain occurs during an activity. Respiratory symptoms (breathlessness) may also be present in case the disease has spread to the lungs.

About www.cancer.im
When an individual is diagnosed with cancer, the feeling of panic is overwhelming. As loved ones hear the news, they too are overwhelmed and often do not know what to do. Cancer.im provides a common sense approach to managing this chaos and uncertainty. The goal is to increase the patient’s quality of life and enable them to take back control.

Cancer.im is a social network for cancer patients, advocates, and volunteers. Members can connect to other people affected by cancer, organize the personal and professional resources available to them, research the qualitative and quantitative aspects of cancer, and create a customized strategy for beating or preventing the disease.

Cancer.im was founded by people with firsthand experience with cancer. Cancer.im continues to grow by the individuals who continually donate their time, resources, and experience to helping cancer patients navigate the obstacles they face. Our driving principles are based on clinical data which have shown that:

1. Cancer patients who have an active support network, outlive cancer patients who do not
2. Increasing a Cancer Patient’s Quality of Life, directly lowers the incidence of morbidity

Together, we believe that the Cancer.im social network can change the way in which patients view and manage their disease.

Cancer.im is guided by the following principles which collectively make up our mission.

1. Cancer is a generic term used to describe a unique disease. We want to empower every cancer patient with the information and resources they need to create a customized cancer strategy as unique as they are.
2. Cancer experiences are often characterized by feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. We want to turn cancer patients from hopeless to hopeful, and cancer advocates from helpless to helpful.
3. Every individual who has been through an experience with cancer has unique wisdom that others can benefit from. We want to harvest and organize this wisdom and make it available to the world.
4. Cancer patients who have an active support network outlive cancer patients who do not. We want to empower every cancer patient, regardless of their ability to pay, with the ability of organizing and managing their own support network and outlive this disease.
5. Increasing a cancer patient's quality of life directly lowers the incidence of morbidity. We want to organize and empower those who surround a patient with the knowledge and ability to directly affect that patient’s quality of life for the better by alleviating the daily burden associated with cancer.

With these principles always in mind, and the continual dedication of our online community, we can change the way the world views and manages cancer!