

Understanding Leptomeningeal Metastases (LM)

It's More Common than You Think – Talk to Your Doctor

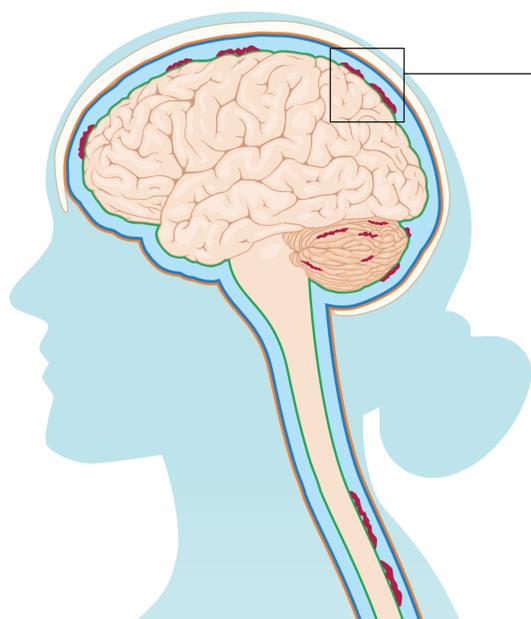
What is LM?

Leptomeningeal Metastases (LM), also known as Leptomeningeal Disease (LMD), happen when cancer spreads to the cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) and tissues that surround your brain and spinal cord (the leptomeninges).

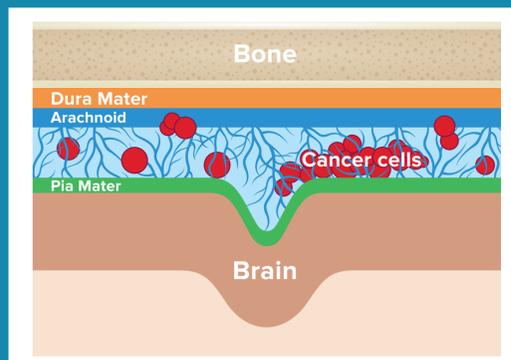
- CSF flows through a space that contains important structures like cranial and spinal nerves.
- The two layers of tissue are called the arachnoid and pia mater, and these tissues help protect your brain and spinal cord.¹

How common is LM?

- 5%-10% of all people who have cancer develop LM.²
- There are an estimated 132,000 new cases of LM in the U.S. each year.³

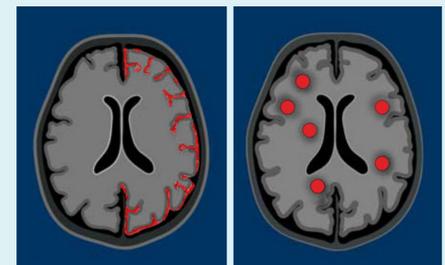


Leptomeningeal Metastases



Cancer cells can enter the leptomeninges through blood vessels, lymph vessels and along nerves in the brain and spine.

MRI Scans of the Brain with LM



Diffuse

Nodular

These brain scans show how LM can appear. Cancer cells can appear as diffuse (floating in the CSF or spread across the lining) or nodular (in a mass or lump). Often, these cancer cells do both.⁴

Most Common Cancers Leading to LM



Breast



Lung



Melanoma



Brain & Spine



Gastro-intestinal



Blood

LM can happen with any type of solid or blood cancer.

Most Common LM Symptoms



Headaches & dizziness



Confusion



Seizures



Nausea & vomiting



Vision changes



Facial drooping



Weakness in extremities



Numbness or tingling

You may have one or more of these symptoms. These symptoms may come and go or get worse over time.

LM is underdiagnosed, making early detection with advanced diagnostics critical.



Diagnostic tools: CSF analysis, MRI imaging of the brain and spine, physical and neurological exam



Treatment options: Chemotherapy, targeted therapy, immunotherapy (given by IV or directly into the CSF), radiation therapy

There is hope! Clinical trials, advancements in CSF diagnostics and new targeted therapies offer promise for improving outcomes.

Data source references:

1. <https://lmcancer.org/about-meningeal-disease/>
2. <https://health.ucsd.edu/care/cancer/cancers-we-treat/brain-tumor/leptomeningeal-cancer/>
3. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40478-025-01959-4>
4. <https://radiologyassistant.nl/neuroradiology/enhancement-patterns/enhancement-patterns-in-cns-diseases>

For more information about LM, visit lmcancer.org



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