

## **Bone tumours**

Bone tumour is a rare disease. It affects young people more than adults. The two most common types of bone tumours are called Osteosarcoma and Ewing's Sarcoma. Both are cancerous.

Most osteosarcoma sufferers are aged between 10 and 25. This malignant tumour usually develops at the tip of long bones such as the part around the knee or at the end of the femur (thigh bone).

Ewing's Sarcoma occurs more among children and adolescents. This tumour can develop in any part of any bone. Besides destroying the bone and attacking the soft tissue around it, Ewing's Sarcoma may also spread along the marrow cavity.

The most common symptoms of bone tumours are pain and swelling of the affected bone. If not treated, the symptoms become more intense with time. If the spine is involved, patients may experience weakness and numbness of the limb. In severe cases, the tumour may weaken the bone which may then crack.

Bone tumours can be diagnosed with the help of X-rays, MRI, CT scan and biopsy. Chemotherapy and surgery are usually used to deal with the disease. Chemotherapy can shrink the local tumour, enabling surgeons to remove it without having to amputate the limb.

Early detection and timely treatment can increase the chances of preserving the limb. The cure rates of osteosarcoma and Ewing's Sarcoma are about 60-70 per cent and 80 per cent respectively.