



Sarcomas are rare cancers that develop in the muscle, bone, nerves, cartilage, tendons, blood vessels, fat and fibrous tissues.

Sarcomas fall into two broad categories:

- 1. Soft tissue sarcomas (STS)**
- 2. Primary bone sarcomas**

About 8/10 sarcomas start in soft tissue and 6/10 occur in the legs. They may, however, affect almost any part of the body. STS may occur at any age but are most common in middle aged and older adults. They are relatively more common in children and young adults, accounting for 7–10% of children's cancers. In Ireland approximately 200–250 adults are diagnosed with some form of sarcoma each year.

Sarcomas are much more likely to be cured with surgery *(and sometimes radiotherapy and/or chemotherapy)* if they are diagnosed when small.

It is difficult to generalise about specific symptoms and the following should act as a guide only:

Symptoms of soft tissue sarcomas:

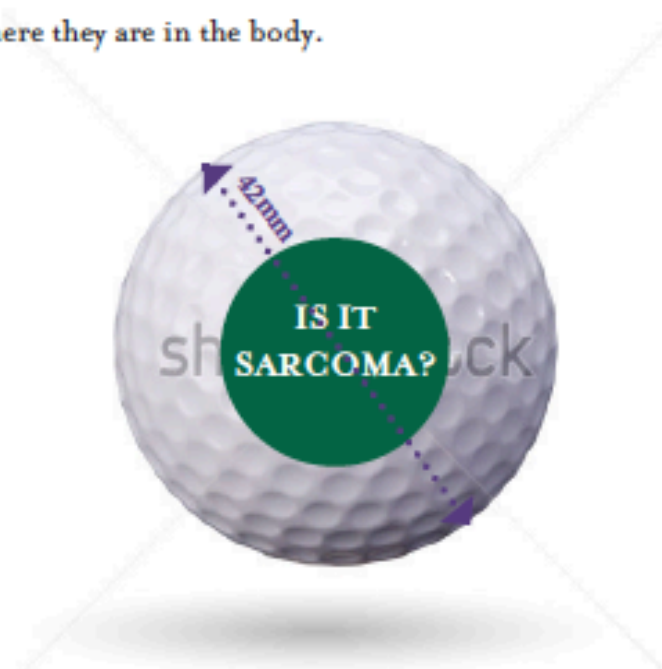
In their early stages soft tissue sarcomas do not usually cause symptoms. As they can grow anywhere in the body, the symptoms will depend on where the cancer is.

Of course, many people get lumps and bumps and most of them will not be cancer.

A lump is more likely to be a sarcoma if it:

- Measures more than 4-5 cm across – the size of a golf ball
- Is getting bigger
- Lies deep/underneath the skin
- Is not tender (*but may be painful if it pushes on nerves or stretches the skin*)

It is possible to have other symptoms from sarcoma, depending on where they are in the body.



Symptoms of primary bone sarcomas:

Bone sarcomas most frequently present as pain (or occasionally an enlarging hard lump) around a bone and though any bone can be affected they most frequently start close to the knee

**For more information please go to
www.irishsarcomagroup.ie**