Ready to start planning your care? Call us at 800-525-2225 to make an appointment.
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Our acoustic neuroma treatment team will collaborate to give you the most advanced care that fits your unique needs. From left: Neurosurgeon Cameron Brennan, radiation oncologist Kathryn Beal, and neurotologist Samuel Selesnick.

Acoustic neuroma, also called vestibular schwannoma, is a type of benign (noncancerous) tumor. It starts in the cells that wrap around the hearing and balance nerve that connects your ear to your brain.

Most acoustic neuromas grow very slowly. As this happens, the tumor begins to press on nearby nerves, blood vessels, and the surface of the brain stem and cerebellum (the base of the brain). The pressure from a growing acoustic neuroma is what leads to the development of symptoms.

Each year in the United States, more than 5,000 people are diagnosed with an acoustic neuroma. They are often between the ages of 30 and 60.

Where Acoustic Neuroma (Vestibular Schwannoma) Develops

Acoustic neuroma tumors begin in what are called Schwann cells. These cells make myelin, which is the material that insulates and protects the nerves throughout your body.

Most acoustic neuromas begin in the vestibular nerve, which helps you keep your balance. Tumor growth leads to hearing loss and balance disorders.

Some acoustic neuromas begin in the cochlear nerve, which sends sound from your inner ear to your brain.



Brain Tumor Remote Second Opinions from Neurosurgeons at MSK

Learn how to get a remote second opinion about your brain cancer or benign tumor diagnosis from MSK neurosurgeons.

Learn more

Risk Factors for Acoustic Neuroma (Vestibular Schwannoma)

There are no obvious risk factors for developing an acoustic neuroma. Most affect only one ear.

Some people develop acoustic neuromas in both ears as part of a hereditary disorder called NF2-related schwannomatosis. This is rare. When it does happen, teens and young adults are most often affected.

How We Care for You

Acoustic neuroma tumors begin in Schwann cells.

Schwann cells make myelin, which is the material that insulates and protects the nerves throughout your body.

If you think you may have an acoustic neuroma, Memorial Sloan Kettering's experts can make or confirm your diagnosis. Once a diagnosis is made, we'll work with you to determine which treatment is the best. Treatments for acoustic neuroma include wait and see (observation), surgery, radiation therapy, or a combination of surgery and radiation. If your symptoms are not severe, and if the tumor is small and if it is not growing, we may recommend observation of your condition with no other intervention.

Working as a team, our experts will:

- quickly determine if acoustic neuroma is causing your symptoms
- design a customized treatment plan
- if necessary, start with surgery, radiation, or other treatments right away

An appointment to see one of our experts for an acoustic neuroma diagnosis or treatment is usually available within days.



Finding a New Normal after Acoustic Neuroma: Craig's Story

Meet Craig Straus, who was treated at MSK for an acoustic neuroma, a type of noncancerous tumor that develops in the inner ear.

Learn more

Request an Appointment

Call 212-639-2384
Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., (Eastern time)

Make an Appointment

NEXT
Acoustic Neuroma (Vestibular Schwannoma) Symptoms

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