

Ready to start planning your care? Call us at [800-525-2225](tel:800-525-2225) to make an appointment.

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Memorial Sloan Kettering  
Cancer Center

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Diagnosis of Brain Metastases

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## Imaging Tests

### Computed tomography (CT)

During a [CT scan](#), a special machine uses X-rays to take a fast series of pictures from many angles. The X-ray pictures are put together to make 3D images of the brain. These images can show problems, such as tumors in the brain.



Experts, such as neuroradiologist Robert Young, evaluate brain tumors that have spread from other parts of the body.

### Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)

An [MRI](#) is a test that uses strong magnetic fields to take pictures. It lets us see very detailed images of brain tissue and find small tumors that CT scans may miss. It's also used to check your response to certain treatments.

### Functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI)

An [fMRI](#) helps us map areas of your brain, including centers of speech and motor function. It gives us a clear picture of your condition before we create a personal care plan for you.



## The Role of Imaging To Diagnose Cancer

Our doctors use advanced imaging tests, such as CT scans, MRIs, and PET scans, to help detect and diagnose disease, make appropriate treatment recommendations, and monitor your response to therapy.

[Learn more](#)

## Procedures

A [spinal tap](#) (lumbar puncture) is a procedure to get a sample of your spinal fluid. A pathologist will look at your spinal fluid under a microscope. A pathologist is a doctor who looks at body tissue under a microscope to diagnose disease. Spinal taps can be very useful to help diagnose a type of cancer called neoplastic meningitis (NEE-oh-PLAS-tik MEH-nin-JY-tis). This is when cancer cells invade the cerebrospinal fluid, which surrounds your brain and spinal cord.



## 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](#)

A biopsy is rarely used to diagnose brain metastases. During this procedure, a surgeon removes a small tissue sample from your brain. A pathologist looks at the sample under a microscope for signs of cancer.

### Request an Appointment

Call [212-639-5837](tel:212-639-5837)

Available Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Eastern time)

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APPOINTMENTS

800-525-2225



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