

# Meningioma: A Clear, Reassuring Guide for Patients

I'm **Dr. Ravindran Karuppiah**, Consultant Neurosurgeon in Malaysia. I understand that hearing the word *brain tumour* can be frightening. Many patients come to me worried, confused, and unsure what to expect.

If you or your loved one has been told you may have a **meningioma**, this guide is here to help you understand it—simply, clearly, and calmly—so you can take the next step with confidence.

## What Is a Meningioma?

A **meningioma** is a type of tumour that grows from the **covering of the brain**, not the brain itself.

Your brain is surrounded by protective layers (like a cushion and shield). A meningioma develops from these layers.

### Key things to understand:

- It is usually **slow-growing**
- It often takes **years to develop**
- Many are **non-aggressive**
- Some may not need immediate treatment

Because it grows slowly, many people may not even realize they have one—until it becomes large enough to press on nearby brain structures.

👉 Think of it like this, it's not invading the brain but it's **pushing on it**. That pressure is what causes symptoms.

## Symptoms to Watch For

Symptoms depend on **where the tumour is located** and how much pressure it is causing.

Some people have no symptoms at all. Others may notice subtle changes that slowly worsen over time.

### Common symptoms include:

#### Headaches

- Persistent or worsening over time
- Different from your usual headaches
- Often worse in the morning

#### Changes in Vision

- Blurred or double vision
- Loss of part of your visual field

#### Seizures (Fits)

- Sudden shaking episodes
- Unexplained blackouts

### **Weakness or Numbness**

- In the arm or leg
- Usually on one side of the body

### **Balance Problems**

- Feeling unsteady
- Difficulty walking straight

### **Memory or Personality Changes**

- Increased forgetfulness
- Changes in behaviour noticed by family

### **⚠ Important to know:**

These symptoms are **not always caused by a tumour**. Many common conditions can cause similar signs.

But if symptoms are:

- Persistent
- Progressive
- Unexplained

👉 They should **not be ignored**

## **When Should You See a Neurosurgeon?**

Many patients ask me:

“Do I really need to see a brain specialist?”

The answer depends on your symptoms and findings.

**You should seek evaluation if you notice:**

### **Urgent warning signs**

- Sudden weakness in your arm or leg
- Repeated seizures
- Significant vision problems
- Difficulty speaking or understanding

### **Concerning ongoing symptoms**

- Headaches that are worsening over weeks or months
- Gradual changes in memory or personality

- Persistent dizziness or imbalance

### **If a scan has already shown a tumour**

- Even if you feel well
- Even if it was found incidentally

### **Why early evaluation matters**

Meningiomas are often manageable—but timing is important.

Early assessment allows us to:

- ✓ Monitor safely if treatment is not needed
- ✓ Plan treatment before symptoms worsen
- ✓ Avoid complications from delayed care

👉 The goal is **control, not panic**

## **How Is a Meningioma Treated?**

Treatment is not the same for everyone.

One of the biggest misconceptions is:

“All brain tumours need surgery immediately.”

That is **not true** for meningiomas.

### **Treatment depends on:**

- Size of the tumour
- Location
- Symptoms
- Growth over time
- Your overall health

### **1. Observation (Watch and Monitor)**

In many cases, **no immediate treatment is needed**.

If the tumour is:

- Small
- Not causing symptoms
- Found incidentally

👉 We may simply monitor it with regular scans.

This avoids unnecessary treatment while keeping you safe.

## 2. Surgery

Surgery is recommended when:

- The tumour is causing symptoms
- It is growing
- It is pressing on important structures

**What surgery involves:**

- Removing the tumour safely
- Relieving pressure on the brain
- Preserving normal brain function

Modern neurosurgery is:

- Precise
- Carefully planned
- Focused on safety and recovery

👉 The goal is not just removal—but **safe removal**

## 3. Radiotherapy (Focused Radiation)

Sometimes, instead of surgery or after surgery, we use **targeted radiation**.

This is:

- Non-invasive
- Focused only on the tumour
- Designed to stop growth

It is often used when:

- The tumour is in a difficult location
- Complete removal is not possible
- Surgery carries higher risk

## What Happens After Treatment?

This is one of the most common concerns patients have.

### After surgery:

- Most patients recover gradually over days to weeks
- Symptoms often improve as pressure is relieved
- Follow-up scans ensure everything remains stable

### Long-term care:

- Regular monitoring may still be needed
- Most patients return to normal life

### A key reassurance:

👉 Many meningiomas are **treatable and manageable conditions**

The focus is:

- Preserving your quality of life
- Preventing progression
- Supporting long-term wellbeing

## Why Choosing the Right Specialist Matters

Not all brain tumours are the same and not all treatments are the same.

Meningiomas can be:

- Close to nerves controlling vision
- Near areas responsible for movement or speech
- Located at the skull base (deep and complex areas)

This is where experience matters.

### As a neurosurgeon, my approach is:

#### 1. Careful Evaluation

I take time to understand:

- Your symptoms
- Your scans
- Your concerns

#### 2. Individualised Treatment

Not every patient needs surgery.

Sometimes, the best treatment is:

👉 Reassurance and monitoring

### **3. Precision Surgery (When Needed)**

When surgery is required:

- It is planned in detail
- Focused on safety
- Tailored to your tumour's location

### **4. Clear Communication**

You will understand:

- What is happening
- Why we are choosing a specific plan
- What to expect next

**My areas of focus include:**

- Brain tumours
- Skull base surgery
- Minimally invasive techniques
- Complex neurosurgical care

## **Common Questions Patients Ask**

**“Is this cancer?”**

Most meningiomas are not aggressive. They tend to grow slowly.

**“Do I need surgery immediately?”**

Not always. Many patients are safely monitored.

**“Will I recover fully?”**

Many patients return to normal life, especially with early treatment and proper planning.

**“Is brain surgery safe?”**

Modern neurosurgery has advanced significantly. Safety and precision are always the priority.

## **A Final Word**

If you've reached this page, you are likely worried.

That is completely understandable.

But here is what I want you to remember:

- 👉 A meningioma is often **manageable**
- 👉 Not every case needs immediate treatment
- 👉 You have time to understand your options
- 👉 With the right care, outcomes can be very good

## Take the Next Step

If you:

- Have symptoms that concern you
- Have been diagnosed with a meningioma
- Or simply want a second opinion

I encourage you to seek clarity.

📞 **Book a Consultation**

**Speak directly with me to understand your condition and options clearly.**

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👉 *Early clarity brings peace of mind. Let's take the next step together.*