

CNS TUMOR MAP, 2023 WHO-5 REVISION WITH MOLECULAR INTEGRATION

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Ref: WHO Tumor of the CNS (5th ed, 2023)

SUPRATENTORIAL
 MIDLINE
 INFRATENTORIAL
 BRAIN & CONSTEM
 VENTRICLES

LEGEND

- E = Rosenthal's
- R = Seizures
- P = Perivascular pattern
- b = BRAF alteration
- i = IDH1/2 mutation
- o = 1p/19q co-del
- L = Low grade
- I = Grade III
- II = Grade IV
- = Not elsewhere classified

* Tumor summaries below do not necessarily state the formal WHO preferred terminology, in the name of brevity.
Not all CNS tumors are described here. Specifically, this chart will not address meningiomas, CNS lymphomas or mesenchymal tumors.

INFANT HIGH-GRADE GLIOMA

Usually embryonal "PNET-like" histology. Sometimes papillary, rosetted or spindle growth patterns. Occasionally lower-grade glial pattern.

POS: GFAP, MYB, EMA (dot-like), CD40, NGS: KIF1A, IDH1, IDH2

HGG pattern: ALK / ROS / NTRK / MET alterations
LGG pattern: ALK alterations only

Usually don't have H3K27M or BRAF mutations

ANGIOCENTRIC GLIOMA

Circumscribed, spindle cell tumor with elongated cells radially arranged around vessels - akin to ependymomatous rosettes

POS: GFAP, MYB, EMA (dot-like), CD40, NGS: KIF1A, IDH1, IDH2

MYB (6q23) rearrangement, usu MYB-QKI

Ependymoma, pilomyxoid astrocytoma, astroblastoma

ASTROBLASTOMA, MN1 ALTERED

Well defined tumor arranged in radial "rosettes" with broad bases. **Stromal sclerosis**. +/- papillary and necrosis

POS: GFAP, MYB, EMA (var), IDH1, IDH2 (usu)

NEG: IDH1, BRAF, V600E

Rearrangements involving MN1 (22q12)

ST-EPN

PLEOMORPHIC XANTHOASTROCYTOMA

Cellular/pleomorphic, sometimes lipidized with multinucleation & nuclear inclusions. Frequent perivascular lymphocytes and reticulin

POS: GFAP, BRAF V600E, MAP2 (var), CD34 (var)

NEG: p16 null (usually), IDH1

BRAF mut (80%), CDKN2A del (60%)

Grade 3 = >5 mitoses & necrosis | Epithelioid GBM

GBM, GIANT CELL

Glioma with many large/giant cells. Increased reticulin w/ mesenchymal look. Zonal necrosis and +/- MV proliferation. Often in younger patients

POS: S100, GFAP (patchy), EMA/CK (focal)

NEG: H3, retained INI1/BRG1, MMR loss

IDH WT, H3 WT. Pdx cases usu. BRAF V600E neg

High mutation burden + MMR gene mutations

Related to anaplastic PXA or may arise from Gr2PXA

ASTROCYTOMA (IDH MUT)

Infiltrative glial tumor with hypercellularity, mitoses, and vascular proliferation. **Less pronounced necrosis**. Often arising from lower grade glioma

POS: GFAP, IDH1 R132H, p53

NEG: H3K27M, ATRX, p16, IDH1 (if alternative mutation)

IDH mutated & CDKN2A/B homozy. deletion

Additionally: TP53 mut, ATRX mut, MGMT hypermeth

IDH-WT GBM, IDH-mut anaplastic astro

GLIOBLASTOMA (IDH WT)

Infiltrative glial tumor with hypercellularity, mitoses, **pseudopalisading necrosis** and vascular proliferation. Small cell var = minimal atypia

POS: GFAP, IDH1 R132H, p53, S100, focal INI-1 loss

NEG: H3K27M, CK5/6

IDH WT & H3 WT. TERT promoter mut, EGFR alterations (esp in small cell var.), TP53 mut

Epithelioid GBM, Oligodendroglioma (small cell var)

PEDIATRIC LOW-GRADE GLIOMA, ALK FUSION

Gliol or glio-neuronal tumor with mod. cellularity and mild atypia. High-grade versions also exist.

POS: GFAP, ALK

NEG: Ki67 (very low)

PLNTY, Ganglioglioma

DNET

Glioneuronal tumor with oligo-like cells, mucoid microcysts and "floating" neurons. +/- glioma areas & separate FCD (IIa)

Oligo-like: POS: S100, Olig2, CD34 (focal)

NEG: GFAP (in oligo-like), IDH1

BRAF mut (30%), Chr 5 and 7 gains (30%)

Piloicytic astro, oligodendroglioma, ganglioglioma

PLNTY

Gliol tumor with piloid cells, set among prominent vasculature and heavy calcification

POS: GFAP, CD34 (strong), +/- BRAF

NEG: CgA, IDH1, Synap (weakly), Ki67 usu low

FGFR2, CNNA3 fusions, BRAF V600E, FGFR1 alterations

Piloicytic astrocytoma, DNET, ganglioglioma

PAPILLARY GLIONEURONAL TUMOR

Low-grade biphasic glioneuronal tumor arranged in **pseudopapillae** surrounding hyalinized vessels. Intervening ganglionic cells with neuropil

POS: GFAP and S100 (glial); Olig2 (var), Synap

NEG: CgA

SILC4A1-PRKCA fusion in most

Ependymoma, AVM

GBM, EPITHELIOD

PXA-like glioma with large/giant cells. Zonal necrosis and +/- MV proliferation. Often in younger patients

POS: S100, GFAP (patchy), EMA/CK (focal), BRAF

NEG: H3, retained INI1/BRG1, p16 null

IDH WT, H3 WT, BRAF V600E (50%), CDKN2A del

High mutation burden + MMR gene mutations

? related to PXA or may arise from Gr2PXA

ASTROCYTOMA (IDH MUT)

Cellular astrocytic, fibrillar neoplasm with mild to moderate nuclear atypia, angulated nuclei + hyperchromasia. No MVP or necrosis allowed.

POS: GFAP, TP53, IDH1 R132H (80%)

NEG: ATRX (loss)

(80%) IDH1/2 mut & TP53 mut + CDKN2A/B retained, MGMT promoter methylation (50%)

Grade 3 = Hypercellular + increased mitoses

EXTRAVENTRICULAR NEUROCYTOMA

Round cell neurocytic tumor with prominent intralaminar pseudorosettes. Oligo-like with occasional ganglioid differentiation.

POS: Synap

NEG: CgA, IDH1, GFAP (mostly), Ki67 usu low

Rarely co-del 1p/19q, FGFR1-TACC3 fusions

Never IDH1/2 mutation or BRAF V600E mutation

Oligodendroglioma, DNET, ganglioglioma, PGNT

DESMOPLASTIC INFANTILE ASTRO/GANGLIO

Triphasic tumor: glial cyst wall, desmoplastic embryonal neural nodule +/- ganglion cell component.

POS: GFAP, reticulin fibres, Synap (neurons), desmin (rare)

Rare aneuploidy. Rare BRAF V600E mutations. No BRAF-fusions or TP53 mutations

Embryonal tumors, ganglioglioma, PXA

DICER1-ASSOCIATED CNS SARCOMA

High-grade spindle cell neoplasm with PFB-like pattern, eosinophilic globules and - rhabdo cells.

POS: Desmin (focal), myogenin (focal)

NEG: GFAP, Olig2, Synap, INI1 (retained)

Bi-allelic DICER1 mutations

Embryonal tumors, GBM, ATRT

DIFFUSE GNT W/ OLIGO-LIKE FEATURES AND NUCLEAR CLUSTERS

Cellular, infiltrative oligo-like morphology with scattered "pennies-on-plate" clusters of pleomorphic nuclei

POS: Olig2 (tumor cells), Synap (background)

NEG: GFAP

Monosomy 14 is consistently present

DNET, diffuse pediatric astrocytoma, FGFR1 mutated

MULTINODULAR AND VACUOLATING GNT

Temporal lobe - frontal lobes. Nodular arrangement of neurons with nodules and pericellular vasculature. Multinucleated neurons are absent

POS: Olig2, MAP2, weak Synap

NEG: Chromogranin, NeuN, GFAP

MAPK mutations, BRAF mut (not V600E), FGFR2 fusions

DNET, Ganglioglioma

INFANT-TYPE HEMISPHERIC GLIOMA, GENETICALLY DEFINED

Many genetically defined embryonal tumors look similar to one another:

- CNS NB-FoxR2: Resembles CNS neuroblastoma, ganglionic nodules
- CNS HGNET-MN1: Solid + pseudopapillary tumor, resembles astroblastoma
- CNS HGNET-EFT-CIC: Can resemble EWS
- CNS HGNET-BCOR: Gliol looking w/ rosettes or ependymoma-like
- CNS HGG-ALK/ROS/NTRK

CNS NB-FoxR2: Olig2, Synaptophysin, GFAP

CNS HGNET-MN1: GFAP

CNS HGNET-EFT-CIC: NUT1

CNS HGNET-BCOR: GFAP, B-cat (muc), BCOR

CNS HGG-ALK/ROS/NTRK: ALK1, ROS1, NTRK

CNS NB-FoxR2: Intrachromosomal rearrangement, FoxR2 upreg.

CNS HGNET-MN1: Various fusion partners

CNS HGNET-EFT-CIC: CIC-NUTM1 fusion

CNS HGNET-BCOR: BCOR-ITD exon 15

CNS HGG-ALK/ROS/NTRK: Various fusion partners across all

DIFFUSE HEMISPHERIC GLIOMA, G34R MUT

Embryonal or GBM-like patterns

H3 G34 mut, ATRX loss

GANGLIOGLIOMA

Disorganized, variably cellular lesion with glial and neuronal component. Look for binucleated and dysplastic neurons. Perivascular lymphocytes.

POS: (Neuron) MAP2, Synap, BRAF V600E, CD34

Rarely: H3K27M in non-infiltrative, temporal cases

BRAF V600E (~50%), BRAF fusions (rarely)

NO IDH1/2 mutations (excludes this diagnosis)

DNET, Oligodendroglioma, co-existing FCD (type IIa)

DIFFUSE LOW GR. GLIOMA, MAPK PATHWAY ALTERED

Bland, infiltrative glial lesion, same with oligo like morphology (FGFR1 mutated) or pilocytic morphology (BRAF mutated)

POS: GFAP, p16 (not null), Olig2

MAPK pathway mut: BRAF, FGFR1, FGFR2, NTRK, MET

No CDKN2A/B deletion

Piloicytic astro, PLNTY, DNET. High grade astro with piloid features if CDKN2A/B deleted

DIFFUSE ASTROCYTOMA, MYB ALTERED

Bland, minimally cellular round glial cells with entrapped neurons and vague perivascular arrangement

POS: GFAP, ATRX

NEG: Olig2, IDH1, CD34

MYB or MYBL1 fusions (but usu not MYB-QKI)

Angiocentric glioma, Diffuse astrocytomas

OLIGODENDROGLIOMA

Infiltrating gliomas with round, "fried-egg" cells in delicate chicken-wire vasculature background. **Grade 3 =** incr. mitoses + Microvase prolif + necrosis

POS: IDH1 (90%), ATRX (retained), S100, Olig2

NEG: GFAP (mostly)

IDH1/2 mut + co-del 1p/19q | Often: CIC & TERT mut.

NEG: mutations in ATRX or TP53

Neurocytoma, clear cell ependymoma, DNET, Piloicytic

ATYPICAL TERATOID/RHABDOID TUMOR

Supratentorial > infratentorial & midline

Polyphenotypic, hypercellular embryonal tumor with rhabdoid and occasional anaplastic cells.

POS: INI1 or BRG1 (aberrant loss), GFAP (focal)

SMARCB1 > SMARCB4 alterations. Mut >> deletions, 33% germline

All embryonal tumors in children

EMBRYONAL TUMOR WITH MULTILAYERED ROSETTES

Cerebellar - Midline/Posterior fossa. Embryonal tumor with layered rosettes and islands of nucleus free neuropil

POS: LIN28 (strong & diffuse), Synap (neuropil)

NEG: INI1 (retained), GFAP

C13MC-altered

Embryonal tumors, anaplastic ependymoma, CPC

pHGG, H3 and IDH WT

Supratentorial >> Brainstem. 3 types: RTK, RTK2, MYCN type (often biphasic: infiltrative - embryonal nodules)

POS: GFAP +/-, Neuronal markers +/-, Olig2

NEG: H3 K27M, IDH1/2

IDH & H3 wt. Inact CDKN2A/B, PDGFRA/RTK type, EGFR (RTK2 type), MYCN (MYCN type)

All embryonal tumors in children

EPENDYMOMA (ST)

Can be papillary or clear cell morphology. Clear cell = arranged in cellular groups with perinuclear halos, focal perivascular rosettes.

SP-YAP1: GFAP, S100, EMA (dot-like), no LICAM

SP-ZFTA: Cyclin-D1, LICAM, p16 null

ST-EPN-ZFTA: ZFTA-RELA fusion, Chromothripsis

ST-EPN-YAP1: YAP1 fusions

Oligodendroglioma, neurocytoma, hemangioblastoma

PINEOBLASTOMA

Embryonal, hypercellular tumor of pineal region with focal rosette formation. Often invasive and disseminated

POS: Synap (var), NF (focal), CgA (focal)

NEG: INI1 & BRG1 (retained)

RBI deletion, DICER1 mutation

All embryonal tumors of childhood, ATRT

CRIBRIFORM NEUROEPITHELIAL TUMOR

Strands and ribbons, pseudo-rosettes. No rhabdoid cells

POS: EMA, Tryptase, GFAP (var)

NEG: INI1 loss

SMARCB1 loss (2%)

ATRX, malignant chorion?

DIFFUSE MIDLINE HIGH-GRADE GLIOMA, H3K27M

Infiltrative tumor involving midline nuclei or brainstem. Monomorphic tumor cells with variable morphology resembling pilocytic astro to GBM.

POS: GFAP (var), H3K27M, Olig2, MAP2

NEG: retained INI1/BRG1, CgA, ATRX, Olig2

H3K27M mutation (midline), H3G34R (hemispheric) TP53 (50%), PDGFRA amp

Related to anaplastic PXA or may arise from Gr2PXA

PILOCYTIC ASTROCYTOMA

Astrocytic tumor with elongated processes, biphasic density, microcysts and occasional multinucleation. Low mitoses. +/- Vasc prolif, Leptomeningeal spread

POS: GFAP - Olig2, BRAF (hemispheric)

NEG: p53, IDH1/2

Posterior fossa: KIAA1549-BRAF fusion

Cortex/Midline: BRAF mut, FGFR1 (5%), NTRK (~5%)

Piloicytic astro (no EGb/ Rs), Oligo., DNET

EPENDYMOMA (PF)

Monomorphic glioma arranged in rosettes with perivascular nuclear zones. Can have dense cellularity, focal necrosis and hemorrhage

POS: GFAP, S100, EMA (dot-like)

H3K27me3: Lost in EPN-A, Retained in EPN-B

PF-EPN-A: Few copy # changes, CgA, me +

PF-EPN-B: Chromosomal instability, CgA, me -

Choroid plexus tumor, Medulloblastoma, Metastasis

DYSPLASTIC CEREBELLAR GANGLIOCYTOMA

Expansion of molecular and internal granule layers with variably sized ganglionic cells that preserves overall architecture.

POS: Syna

NEG: PTEN (less in adult cases)

Adult: PTEN mutations (Cowden syndrome)

Children: no PTEN mutations

Ganglioglioma, Glioneuronal tumors

PILOCYTIC ASTROCYTOMA VARIANT OF PILOCYTIC ASTROCYTOMA

Piloicytic astrocytic tumor with subtle angiocentric growth, myxoid background & microcysts. Variable mitotic activity. +/- Piloicytic-like areas

POS: GFAP, S100, CD34, Ki67 (up to 20% labeling)

NEG: BRAF V600E, H3K27M

Rarely can have BRAF rearrangement

Piloicytic astrocytoma, Angiocentric glioma

MEDULLOBLASTOMA

Embryonal tumor with variable modes of neuronal differentiation. Cerebellum and 4th ventricle. Anaplasia usu = TP53 mutation

POS: Synap, MAP2, p53 B-cat (WNT), GAB1 (SHR)

NEG: GFAP, INI1 (retained)

4 molecular variants: WNT - Older children, some adults. SHH-TP53 wt - Often hemispheric & desmoplastic/CR. SHH-TP53 mut - TP53 mut confers worse prognosis. G3/4 - Infants/children. Large/anaplasia & MYC amp

MYXOPAPILLARY EPENDYMOMA

Typically found in distal spinal cord. Radially arranged tumor cells in papillary / balloon arrangement around myxoid substance.

POS: GFAP, S100, CD99, Ker AE1/3

NEG: CK5/6, CK7, CK20, EMA, Ki67 (<1%)

Whole chromosome aneuploidy

MYCN amplification (more aggressive variant)

Metastatic papillary tumors (adult), Chordoma

EPENDYMOMA (SPINAL CORD)

Usually typical perivascular patterns. Rarely can be fan-shaped resembling spindle cells where rosettes typically subtle.

POS: FOX1, GFAP, S100, EMA (dot-like)

NEG: BRAF V600E, IDH1/2

Frequent NF2 mutations, del Chr 22

Piloicytic astrocytoma, Schwannoma, Met.

HIGH GRADE ASTROCYTOMA WITH PILOID FEATURES

Cellular, moderately pleomorphic infiltrative tumor with pilocytic morphology, vascular proliferation and focal areas of necrosis.

POS: GFAP

NEG: ATRX (loss), IDH1, H3K27M

Defined by methylation studies. Characteristic NF1/BRAF alterations + del ATRX + del CDKN2A

Piloicytic astrocytoma, IDH-wt GBM

CEREBELLAR LIPONEUROCYTOMA

Cerebellar version of neurocytoma with prominent neoplastic adipocyte-like component.

POS: Synap, NeuN, MAP2, GFAP (focal)

NEG: Ki67 (usu <10%)

TP53 mutation (20%), Chr 14 and 2p deletions

No BRAF or IDH1 mutations

Astrocytomas, lipid-rich SFT?

CHOROID PLEXUS CARCINOMA

Malignant intraventricular tumor w/ sheet-like growth, focal papillary formation, necrosis and brain invasion. Usu Freq. Mitoses.

POS: CK7, p53 (50%)

NEG: S100, TR, EMA, INI1 (Retained)

Cermline TP53 mut (40%)

Anaplastic ependymoma, Embryonal tumors

CHOROID PLEXUS TUMOR

Papillary tumor with delicate fronds with crowded cuboidal cells. Atypical >> 2/10 mit + incr. cellularity, pleomorph, solid growth and/or necrosis.

POS: CK7, TR, S100 (var)

NEG: CK20, EMA (weak)

aCGH: hyperdiploidy, MGMT promoter methylation

OP carcinoma, Endolymphatic sac tumor, Metastasis

SUBEPENDYMAL GIANT CELL TUMOR

Circumscribed glioneuronal tumor with large gemistocytic or ganglion-type cells. Mitoses, tumor lymphocytes and hyalinized vessels present.

POS: GFAP, S100, Synap (var), NeuN (var)

NEG: CD34

TSC1 and TSC2 mutations common

60% sporadic, 40% TS syndromic

Ganglioglioma, PXA (if not obviously near ventricle)

MYXOID GLIONEURONAL TUMOR

DNET-like tumor arising in septum pellucidum > lateral ventricles. Myxoid stroma, microcysts and rosette-formations.

POS: Olig2, MAP2, S100, GFAP (focal)

NEG: CD34, NeuN, IDH1

Defined by PDGFRA K385V/L mutation

DIFFUSE LEPTOMENINGEAL GNT

Oligodendroglial-like tumor with predominant leptomeningeal growth pattern and lesser ganglion cell / neuropil component

POS: Olig2, MAP2, S100, GFAP (focally)

NEG: EMA, NeuN, IDH1

KIAA-BRAF fusion (75%), del 1p (50%), rare 1p/19q del. No BRAF V600E or IDH1/2.

Oligodendroglioma, Piloicytic astro, PXA

ROSETTE FORMING GNT

Biphasic solid-cystic tumor: neurocytic rosettes and piloid astrocytic components. Neurocytic rosettes surround neuropil core.

POS: Neurocytic + Synap, MAP2; Glial + GFAP

NEG: CgA, GFAP, Ki67 usu <2%, II <2% = "atypical"

FGFR1 mut, PIK3CA mut in some

No BRAF alterations or IDH1/2 mutations

Piloicytic astro, neurocytoma, Oligodendroglioma

CENTRAL NEUROCYTOMA

Intraventricular round cell neurocytic tumor with prominent intralaminar vessels and pseudorosettes. Anaplastic cytology = "atypical central neurocytoma"

POS: Synap, NeuN, MAP2

NEG: CgA, GFAP, Ki67 usu <2%, II <2% = "atypical"

aCGH: copy # alterations, MYCN amplification

Piloicytic astro, neurocytoma, Oligodendroglioma

SUBEPENDYMOMA

Ventricular tumor. Clusters of small nuclei arranged in fibrillar matrix with occasional microcysts. Rarely forming rosettes.

POS: GFAP

NEG: EMA, Ki67 (<1%)

Not really relevant

Ependymoma variants

CHORDOID GLIOMA OF 3RD VENTRICLE

Solid neoplasm w/ cords and nests of epithelioid tumor cells. Lymphoplasmacytic infiltrates. Mucinous stroma common. Rarely fibrillar.

POS: GFAP, TTF-1, CD34, Ker (var), S100 (var)

NEG: P53 (weak), Synap, IDH1

PRKCA p463H mutation

IDH, H3, wild-type

Metastasis, Chordoma.

0 - 24 months

2- 10 years

10-50 years

> 50 years