

What Vista intends to do

Vista Chemical recognizes and understands the concern felt by our employees and their families.

The company continues to evaluate the literature and participate in industry groups concerned with the health effects of exposure to chemicals used or manufactured in our plants.

In addition, the company is investigating new non-invasive testing measures which could be used to detect abnormalities.

As we move forward, we'll keep employees informed of our progress.

VISTA

Facts About...

Brain
tumors
and chemical
exposure

VISTA

Vista Chemical Company
Lake Charles VCM Plant

What studies show about brain tumors

The scientific literature and study results present conflicting evidence in regard to the association of brain tumors and vinyl chloride monomer.

Some studies have indicated a possible association between brain tumors and VCM. Others have shown no association at all.

In the studies which indicated a possible association, the number of tumors occurring in studied workers was compared to the number of cases known to occur in the general population. While the number of tumors among the workers was higher than those occurring among the population at large, the difference was small enough that one could not say for sure whether the difference was caused by worker exposure to VCM.

The information on exposure to ethylene dichloride and carbon tetrachloride does not indicate an association between these chemicals and brain tumors.

What are the symptoms of brain tumors?

For brain tumors, clinical findings or symptoms are variable.

Headaches seldom are the first indicators of the presence of a brain tumor. Other symptoms such as convulsions or seizures are probably the more common signs.

Intense headaches accompanied by vomiting, visual disturbances, (blurring or seeing double), weakness and/or trouble with coordination should be thoroughly investigated by a physician.

Also keep in mind that brain tumors may result from other causes as well. For example, certain forms of lung cancer may spread to the brain or other locations in the body.

Good health habits, taking part in Vista's health testing program and periodic visits to your own physician are important to stay ahead of any physical condition that could adversely affect you.

Tests that can detect brain tumors

There are a number of specific diagnostic tests which can be used to determine the presence of a brain tumor. These tests include CAT scans,

MRIs (magnetic resonance imaging), skull x-rays, injection of dyes, or combinations of these and other techniques.

However, most of these are invasive tests which carry some risks of their own. For instance, CAT scans involve exposure to more radiation than a normal chest x-ray and should not be undertaken lightly.

In addition, the multi-phasic testing offered by Vista is designed to provide broad screening, not specific diagnostic tests.

Vista's exam uses questionnaires and interviews to obtain good employee medical histories. These histories, used to determine signs and symptoms of potential health problems, are extremely important because problems are usually detectable before actual physical findings are. When screening evaluations indicate problems, more intensive diagnostic procedures may be recommended.