

## Benign

Approximately 8 out of 10 salivary tumors diagnosed are in a parotid gland. One in 10 diagnosed is in a submandibular gland. The remaining 10% are diagnosed in other salivary glands. **In general**, glands more likely to show tumor growth are also glands least likely to show malignant tumor growth. Thus, although tumors of the **sublingual glands** are rare, almost all of them are **malignant**. In contrast, only about 25% of parotid gland tumors are malignant.

### Clinical features of malignant salivary gland tumors:

– Mucosa is ulcerated – Firm – Painful – **Nodular** – Fixed – Rapid growth

### Malignant Salivary Gland Tumors (*briefly*):

- **Adenocarcinoma, NOS** (*not otherwise specified*): are **rare but aggressive** tumors. About half of these tumors present in the **parotid** glands. Adenocarcinoma is **different** from other salivary gland neoplasms in that as many as **25%** of patients will complain of **pain** or **facial weakness** at presentation.
- **Adenoid cystic carcinoma**: approximately 50 to 70% occur in the minor salivary glands of the palate. In the major salivary glands, the parotid gland is most often affected. Microscopic appearance is described as **cribriform**, tubular or solid. The cribriform pattern is the **most common** and most easily recognizable. It is often referred to as the “**swiss cheese**” pattern.
- **Mucoepidermoid carcinoma**: is the most common **malignant** salivary gland neoplasm in both minor and major glands. It develops most commonly in the major salivary glands, most often the **parotid (45-70%)**. **Microscopically**, these tumors are characterized by the presence of two populations of cells — the mucus cells and the epidermoid cells, the proportion of which helps to define the grade of the tumor.
- **Acinic cell carcinoma**: **Acinic cell carcinoma** is the second most common parotid malignancy and the second most common pediatric salivary gland malignancy (*mucoepidermoid carcinoma is the most common for both*). This tumor is generally regarded as a **low-grade** malignancy.
- **Malignant mixed tumors**: represents **three** separate entities that are histologically distinct; These include the carcinoma ex-mixed tumor, carcinosarcoma or true malignant mixed tumor, and the metastasizing mixed tumor.
- **Polymorphous low-grade adenocarcinoma (PLGA)** is the second most common malignancy in the **minor** salivary glands and occurs most frequently in the palate, lip and buccal mucosa. The microscopic appearance of these tumors is what gives them their name.