

Michael Bolton Opens up About His Brain Cancer

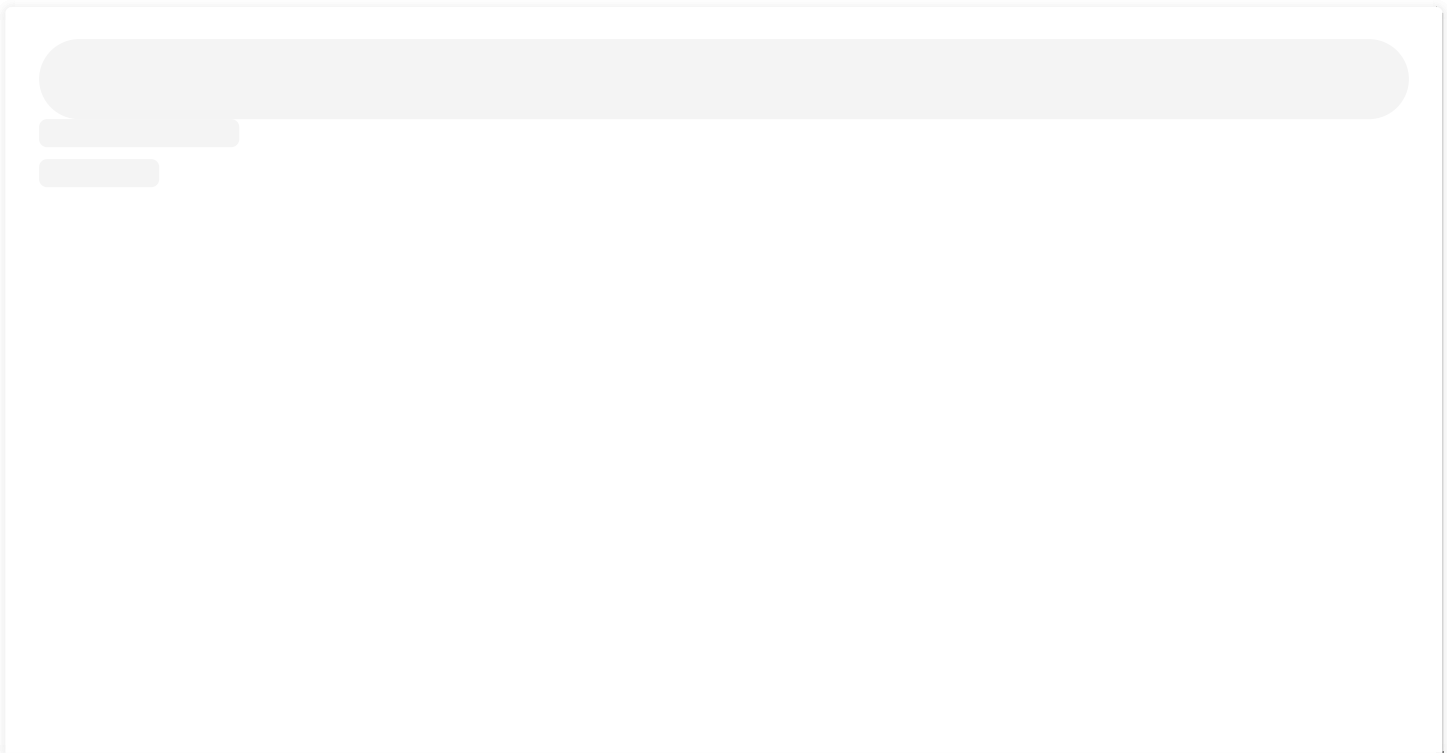
The Grammy winner underwent chemo, radiation and surgeries to remove his brain cancer. Recent scans show no sign of the tumor returning.

May 7, 2025 By Laura Schmidt

Two-time Grammy-winning singer Michael Bolton, 72, recently [opened up to People](#) about living with [brain cancer](#), undergoing treatment and the importance of keeping loved ones close after a [cancer diagnosis](#).

During a family bowling night in the fall of 2023, Bolton started acting unusual, bowling out of turn again and again, his daughter Tayrn, 45, told People.

“That was when we were like, ‘Something’s wrong with his brain,’” Taryn said. “Everything that happened was weird for him but not super alarming. When you look back at everything together...we missed so many things.”



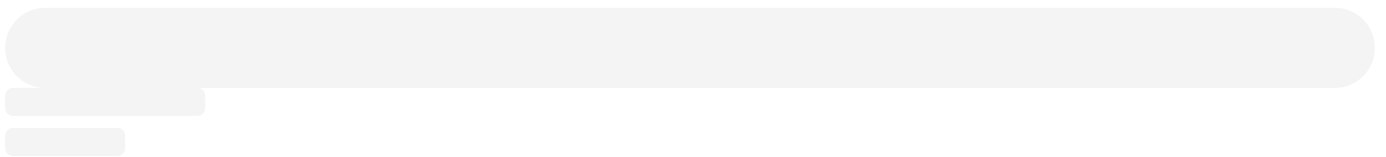


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After [undergoing emergency surgery](#) in December 2023, Bolton announced [via Instagram](#) that he had been diagnosed with the most common and aggressive type of brain cancer: [glioblastoma](#).

Glioblastomas are malignant Grade 4 tumors and considered one of the most complex, deadly and treatment-resistant cancers, according to the [National Brain Tumor Society](#). This type of cancer [accounts for about 14%](#) of all primary malignant brain tumors. In 2023, more than 14,490 Americans were diagnosed with glioblastoma.



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“You’re reaching into your resources and your resolve in a way that you never would have thought,” Bolton told People. “Succumbing to the challenge is not an option. You’re really quickly drawn into a duel. I guess that’s the way you find out what you’re made of.”

[Treatment](#) for a brain tumor depends on its grade, but many people [undergo surgery](#) requiring a craniotomy, a surgical procedure in which part of the skull is temporarily removed to access the brain and the tumor is biopsied for diagnosis.

Doctors were able to remove Bolton's brain tumor in its entirety, which the singer's neuro-oncologist, Ingo Mellinghoff, MD, FACP, of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, said happens with just 30% to 40% of glioblastoma cases.

Bolton's soulful voice never wavered during his treatment journey, according to his daughter Holly, 47.

"He was in recovery in the hospital room singing within minutes," Holly told People. "I remember one of the nurses [at the hospital] had no idea who he was, and she's like, 'Do you know he sings like this?'"

In January 2024, Bolton underwent a second brain surgery due to an infection. He then completed radiation and chemotherapy in October 2024.

"Whenever you find yourself in any kind of challenging position, just to know that you're not alone going through it is a big deal," he said. "It actually helps people to know. It reminds them that they're not alone."

Moving forward, Bolton will undergo MRIs every two months to monitor his brain for cancer recurrence. Unfortunately, glioblastoma recurrence rates are high; indeed, about 90% of people experience tumor regrowth after treatment.

A scan in early April showed no sign of cancer.

Bolton purposefully elected not to receive a prognosis and has chosen to remain hopeful, according to People. He meditates daily, golfs as much as he can, works with a personal trainer and takes voice lessons.

He spent his recent 72nd birthday surrounded by family.

“I find comfort in general more easily. [The whole experience] gives me a heightened sense of appreciation. It’s unthinkable for it to be okay not to make the most of your life,” he told People. “I think we develop capabilities and problem management, and we learn how to make the best out of a bad situation. You have to be a cheerleader for yourself.”

To learn more, click [#Glioblastoma](#) or read Cancer Health’s [Basics on Brain Cancer](#). It reads in part:

What is brain cancer?

Cancer develops when cells grow out of control. There are several types of primary brain cancer (meaning they start in the brain), with the most common being gliomas and glioblastomas, meningiomas, pituitary adenomas, schwannomas and medulloblastomas. Most of these names relate to where in the brain they are located.

What are the symptoms of brain cancer?

Many brain tumors do not cause symptoms. Some are found accidentally if brain imaging with a computed tomography (CT) or MRI scan is done for another reason. When symptoms do occur, they vary depending on which part of the brain or spinal cord is affected. Common symptoms may include:

- Headache
- Weakness or paralysis
- Nausea or vomiting
- Seizures
- Changes in vision, hearing, touch or taste
- Speech problems
- Mood, personality or behavior changes
- Mental confusion, trouble concentrating or memory problems.

How is brain cancer diagnosed?

Early detection and treatment of brain cancer increases the likelihood of long-term survival. Diagnosing brain cancer starts with a physical exam and health history. Often, brain imaging with a CT scan will be ordered. This is an imaging technique that uses X-rays to create a three-dimensional map of the brain. Sometimes an MRI scan is done as well. Other tests may be

ordered, such as blood and urine tests, to determine what other health issues may be present.

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<http://beta.docker.cancerhealth.com/article/michael-bolton-opens-brain-cancer>