



UNDERSTANDING #HEADANDNECKCANCER

WHAT IS HEAD AND NECK CANCER?



Head and neck cancer describes any tumour that is found in the head or neck region, except tumours in the eyes, brain, ears or oesophagus. The treatment plan for individual patients depends on several factors, including the exact location of the tumour, the stage of cancer and the person's age and general health.

You and your doctor should consider treatment options carefully. You should discuss each type of treatment and how it might change the way a patient looks, talks, eats or breathes.

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR DOCTOR:

- What is the primary site of the cancer?
- Where is it located?
- What are my treatment options?
- What treatment plan would you suggest, and why?
- What is the goal of treatment? Is it to completely destroy the tumour, to reduce the tumour size, to alleviate symptoms?
- How often must I receive treatment and how will I feel during and after treatment?
- What risks or potential side effects are there for each treatment?
- How will treatment affect my daily life?

Can I continue working?

TIPS TO ENSURE PROPER NUTRITION DURING TREATMENT

Head and neck cancer and its treatment can cause many side effects that may be temporary or permanent. Discuss with your doctor the side effects. Many side effects can impact a person's ability to eat and get proper nutrition.

TIPS TO GET PROPER NUTRITION DURING TREATMENT INCLUDE:

- Eat soft and moist foods, add extra gravies and sauces to moisten foods.
- Consume soft, high-protein, probiotic-containing foods, such as plain yoghurt or mageu/maas and protein-based shakes.
- Try drinking liquids and semi-soft solids through a straw to bypass sensitive areas.
- Eat paw-paw to encourage saliva production.
- Practice good oral care during treatment.
- Cut out foods that are sharp and crunchy and need a lot of chewing.
- Limit foods that are spicy or acidic, as they can cause mouth pain.
- Do not drink alcohol.
- Manage your sugary drink intake.

EARLY DIAGNOSIS CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE AND GREATLY REDUCES THE DEBILITATING SIDE EFFECTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS HIGHLY PREVENTABLE TYPE OF CANCER.

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