



TIP SHEET

Head & Neck Cancers

WE CAN'T LET CANCER WIN.

THAT'S WHY ROSWELL PARK'S HEAD & NECK CENTER MANAGES 10,000 PATIENT VISITS PER YEAR— AND STUDIES SHOW THAT HIGH VOLUME TRANSLATES TO BETTER OUTCOMES.

With about
10,000
outpatient visits per year, RPCI's Head & Neck Center is a high-volume center focusing exclusively on cancer. We see even rare cancers on a regular basis.

Symptoms of Head & Neck Cancers

Head & neck cancers can occur inside the **mouth** (oral cavity), in the **salivary glands**, in the **sinuses** and **nasal cavity**, in the **larynx** (voice box), and in the **airway leading from behind the nose and mouth to the top of the esophagus** (the pipe through which food travels to the stomach).

Symptoms vary, depending on the location of the cancer, but they may include:

- A sore in the mouth that bleeds or doesn't heal
- Red or white patches inside the mouth that don't clear up
- A lump or swelling in the neck
- A sore throat, or hoarseness that doesn't go away
- Pain in the ears, neck, throat, jaws, or tongue
- Nosebleeds, repeated sinus infections, or nasal congestion that won't clear up despite treatment
 - Blood in mucus that is coughed up
 - Trouble chewing or swallowing
- Loose teeth, or dentures that suddenly don't fit well
- Numbness in the head & neck area
- Sores or changes in the appearance of moles on your head and neck

Who's at Greatest Risk for Head & Neck Cancer?

- People who drink heavily.
- People who use tobacco (smoked or chewed). Risk is greatly multiplied in people who use tobacco and drink heavily.
- People treated previously for head & neck cancer.
- People infected with the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), a very common sexually transmitted disease that often does not produce symptoms. HPV has been linked to rising numbers of head & neck cancers. Often the infection is passed on during oral sex.

RPCI offers **Trans-Oral Robotic Surgery (TORS)**, which can reduce the need for more radical surgery while speeding recovery and minimizing post-surgical pain. It can also reduce the need for radiation treatments after surgery.

ORAL CANCER:
Early detection = better chance for a cure

Oral cancer is a type of head & neck cancer that can be detected by your dentist. Ask for an oral cancer screening at your next dental exam.

RPCI's Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery team brings the latest advances (such as free-tissue transfers and total body contouring) and world-class training to RPCI patients to minimize the side effects of head & neck surgery and protect their quality of life.

Meet the Doctors

Surgery

Hassan Arshad, MD (Photodynamic Therapy)
David Cohan, MD
*Vishal Gupta, MD
(in conjunction with Drs. Arshad, Cohan, Hicks and Kuriakose)
Wesley L. Hicks, Jr., MD
Moni Abraham Kuriakose, MD (Skull Base Surgery)



Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery

Robert Lohman, MD
Wong Moon, MD
Paul Tomljanovich, MD
**Can Ozturk, MD
**Cemile Ozturk, MD
(in conjunction with Drs. Lohman, Moon and Tomljanovich)



Pathology

Mihai Merzianu, MD

Medicine

Yujie Zhao, MD, PhD



Radiation Medicine

Anurag Singh, MD

Diagnostic Radiology

Ahmed Abdelhalim, MD (Pediatric)
Ronald Alberico, MD



Dentistry & Maxillofacial Prosthetics

David Casey, DDS
Anthony Lister, DDS
Philip Williams, DDS
Michael Hess, DDS
Kevin Apolito, DDS (not pictured)



At high risk for oral cancer? Check out RPCI'S screening program

In many cases, oral cancer does not cause symptoms until the disease has spread to the neck and beyond, and then it is more difficult to treat. RPCI offers screening for patients at high risk for oral cancer. You may be eligible if:

- You have a suspicious spot inside your mouth that does not heal.
- You have received a diagnosis of oral cancer but have not started treatment.
- You were treated in the past for head and neck cancer but have been cancer-free for six months. Nearly a third of all patients who were treated for oral cancer will develop it again later on.

RPCI's screening program uses blue fluorescent light to spot abnormal tissue. This method has been shown to work better than regular white light for identifying suspicious areas.

For more information about RPCI's Early Oral Cancer Detection and Diagnosis Screening Program, call 1-716-845-5972.

Specialized care from experts in head & neck cancer

BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York has named Roswell Park Cancer Institute (RPCI) a Blue Distinction Center for Complex and Rare Cancers®, a designation that includes head & neck cancer.

FOR APPOINTMENTS, CALL:

1-800-ROSWELL (1-800-767-9355)

Destroying cancer cells with light

RPCI developed **photodynamic therapy (PDT)**, a non-toxic treatment (not chemotherapy) that uses laser light to activate a light-sensitive drug given to the patient intravenously (through an IV). PDT destroys cancer cells directly while sparing healthy cells. It also shuts down the creation of new blood vessels that would otherwise "feed" the tumor and "wakes up" the immune system to destroy cancer cells throughout the body. The only side effect: temporary sensitivity to light. RPCI patients with head & neck cancer may qualify to enroll on clinical trials involving PDT.

