

Cancer Care Management

We work closely with other medical specialists and allied health professionals to ensure the most ideal outcomes for our patients.



Our surgeons are highly trained to remove cancer with precision



Radiologists interpret scans and help us in the exact staging of patients.



Radiation and Medical Oncologists provide expertise to our patients who may need radiotherapy and chemotherapy.



Reconstructive Plastic Surgeons will help to restore form and function of your physical appearance.



The Speech and Swallowing Therapy team will help you achieve the most ideal outcomes for your speech and swallowing.



Dieticians will provide you with dietary advice before, during and after treatment.



The Dental team ensures that your teeth are in good condition before embarking on radiotherapy.

Our aim is the same as yours – to fight off the cancer and return you to an ideal quality of life.

Clinics 1B

TTSH Medical Centre, Level 1

Contact:

6357 7000 (Central Hotline)



Scan the QR Code with your smart phone to access the information online or visit <http://bit.ly/TTSHHealth-Library>

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Department of OTORHINOLARYNGOLOGY (EAR, NOSE & THROAT)

Oral Tongue Cancer



Overview

The diagnosis of cancer in a patient is often accompanied by disbelief and feelings of helplessness. The feeling of helplessness may be partly due to a lack of knowledge and awareness of the many treatment options available.

This series of brochures will provide you information on common head and neck cancers, focusing on the following:

- Common causes and symptoms
- Investigations required
- Treatment options available

For more information about the condition and treatment options, please consult a head and neck cancer specialist.

Cancer Patient Services

The Department of Otorhinolaryngology (Ear, Nose, Throat) in Tan Tock Seng Hospital offers the following services in relation to head and neck cancers:

1. Diagnosis of the cancer
2. Appropriate staging of the cancer
3. Treatment – every cancer patient is discussed with a multi-disciplinary team to identify the most ideal evidence-based treatment
4. Long-term follow up and monitoring to ensure the cancer does not return

Oral Tongue Cancer

Main Causes

- Smoking
- Excessive alcohol consumption
- Betel nut chewing
- Trauma from sharp teeth

However, patients with no previous history of smoking or excessive alcohol intake may also be diagnosed with this cancer.

Common Symptoms

- Tongue ulcer
- Growth on the tongue
- Bleeding from the growth or ulcer
- Pain in the tongue
- Difficulty in eating
- Lymph gland enlargement in the neck



Cancer arising from the tongue

Examination and Tests

Your doctor will examine the growth / ulcer on the tongue and check if the adjacent structures (e.g. floor of the mouth and the jaw bone) are affected.

Two types of investigations are required:

1. **Biopsy** of the lump on the tongue to determine the presence of cancer
2. **Scans** to determine the spread of the disease to the tongue, neck and other organs. Commonly-performed scans include:
 - Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scan of the tongue and neck
 - Positron Emission Tomography (PET) scan of the whole body

Treatment

The treatment of tongue cancers depends on the stage of disease:

- Early stage: Surgical removal of the tongue tumour and in certain cases, removal of lymph glands from the neck.
- Advanced stage: Surgery and radiotherapy OR chemoradiotherapy

Surgical removal of a tongue tumour will affect your speech and eating. The degree of impairment depends on the size of the tumour and the amount of tongue that is surgically removed.

Your doctors may recommend reconstruction of the tongue when necessary, and refer you for speech and swallowing rehabilitation.