



“YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND SO MANY BRIGHT SMILES HAVE HELPED KEEP MY INTERNAL LITTLE LIGHT SHINING THROUGH A DARK AND SCARY TIME.”

Pat C.

Head and Neck Oncology Program

The Head and Neck Oncology Program at The University of Arizona Cancer Center at St. Joseph’s manages and coordinates the care of patients with cancers of the head and neck. Clinical services are provided by a team of experts including medical oncology, radiation oncology, supportive care professionals, and physical medicine and rehabilitation. The program works closely with referring head and neck surgeons based in the community. The multidisciplinary care team also includes speech pathologists, dieticians, social workers, and nurse navigators.

In conjunction with expert radiologists and pathologists, treatment recommendations are often formulated in a multidisciplinary head and neck tumor board through the evaluation of imaging and biopsy data. The treatment plan recommendations are explained allowing for questions and suggestions to meet the needs and lifestyle of each individual patient.

The clinical team actively participates in national efforts to develop and implement novel immunotherapy approaches for patients with cancers of the head and neck. This level of expertise in precision medicine means treatment plans are developed based on the specific molecular changes of each patient’s tumor. Options may include innovative therapeutic clinical trials that allow early access to new therapies for patients of the Cancer Center.

Radiation oncology options available at our Cancer Center include Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT), Image-Guided Radiation Therapy (IGRT), High Dose Rate (HDR) and Low Dose Rate (LDR) brachytherapy, VMAT and stereotactic body radiotherapy (LINAC-based as well as CyberKnife). Reirradiation for head and neck cancer has now been shown to be a successful salvage strategy for recurrent and residual cancers. Through the use of experts in brachytherapy and stereotactic radiation, along with the entire spectrum of technology, the Cancer Center offers curative treatments for difficult conditions. A rigorous evaluation of imaging and pathology, as well as a review of current evidence and available clinical trials during a head and neck tumor board conference is used to create an individual care plan for each patient.

Caring for head and neck cancer patients within a comprehensive Cancer Center allows various disciplines of clinicians to follow patients from diagnosis, through treatment, and into survivorship, coordinating the latest standard of care treatment options – all in one location.

