



# Head and Neck Oncology

MD Anderson's head and neck oncology program has a remarkable depth of expertise treating cancers in the delicate and multifaceted areas of the head and neck. We see more than 50,000 patients a year with cancers and benign tumors of the head and neck, which gives us the ability to provide unparalleled skill in head and neck surgery, personalized radiation and chemotherapy treatments, novel immunotherapy and targeted therapies and a variety of innovative clinical trials.

## Where you send your patient first matters.

Complex cases of head and neck cancer have been shown to have better overall survival rates when treated at a high-volume comprehensive cancer center. MD Anderson's Head and Neck Center uses an interdisciplinary approach to provide a complete treatment plan tailored specifically to each patient. Within this approach, we incorporate specialists dedicated to the rehabilitation of cancer patients, including audiology, ophthalmology, plastic surgery, prosthodontics and speech/swallowing pathology to maintain or restore a patient's appearance, function and quality of life after treatment.

## Cancers and benign conditions we treat

- Acoustic neuroma
- Benign tumors
- Ear and temporal bone tumors
- Eye cancer
- Inherited endocrine tumors, including childhood endocrine tumors and multiple endocrine neoplasia (MEN) I and II
- Larynx cancer
- Oral cavity cancer
- Oropharynx cancer
- Parathyroid disease and tumors
- Pediatric head and neck cancer
- Salivary gland tumors
- Sarcomas of the head and neck
- Sialadenitis/sialolithiasis
- Skin cancers of the head and neck
- Skull base tumors, including the nasal cavity, sinus cavity, infratemporal fossa and parapharyngeal space tumors
- Thyroid cancer
- Von Hippel Lindau disease

## Advanced treatment options for patients

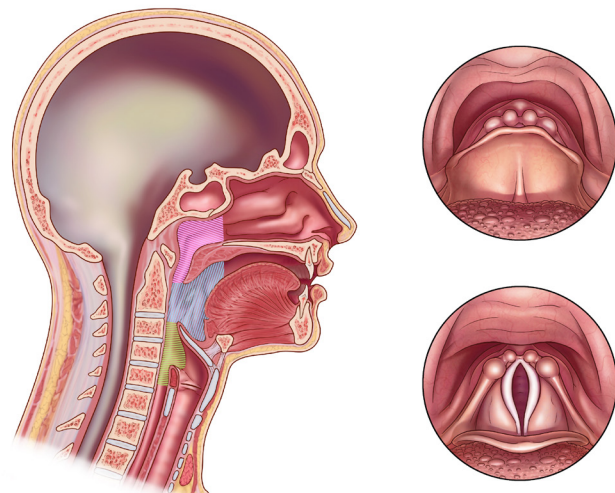
- Chemotherapy
- [Clinical trials](#)
- [Endocrine surgery](#)
- [Head and neck surgery](#)
- [Immunotherapy](#)
- [Ophthalmology and oculoplastics](#)
- [Proton therapy](#)
- [Radiation](#), including stereotactic techniques
- [Reconstructive surgery](#)
- [Skull base surgery](#)
- [Targeted therapy](#)
- [TORS surgery for oropharynx](#)

## Oropharyngeal Cancer

More than 70% of oropharyngeal cancers are caused by HPV, and men are up to five times more likely to get throat cancer than women. MD Anderson's [HPV-Related Cancers Moon Shot® Program](#) intends to improve outcomes for oropharyngeal cancer patients through prevention initiatives and new treatments.

Clinical services for [oropharyngeal](#) cancer include:

- Molecular profiling to identify patients with predictive biomarkers for immunotherapy, which can control or shrink cases of oropharyngeal squamous cell carcinoma before standard-of-care surgery
- Advanced robotic techniques for less invasive surgery options, which can eliminate the need for radiotherapy
- Personalized radiation therapy, such as intensity-modulated radiation therapy (IMRT), proton therapy and adaptive radiation therapy to reduce the intensity of side effects
- Customized radiation stents fabricated with 3D technology that reduce soft tissue and bone damage
- [Clinical trial](#) options, such as the use of MRI to monitor the effects of radiation therapy on normal structures of the head and neck, including the jaw and swallowing muscles
- Access to Oropharyngeal Fast Track Program, which allows local patients to meet with an entire multidisciplinary team within 48 hours to expedite treatment at the TMC location



**Watch Steven Frank, M.D.**, discuss HPV-related oropharyngeal and other uncommon cancers.

## Oral Cancer

Oral cavity cancers are common and pre-cancer conditions, such as dysplasia and lichen planus, are even more common. Research has shown that early diagnosis of these conditions leads to a better chance for successful treatment. MD Anderson's Oral Cavity Program offers optic imaging technology and less-invasive alternatives to biopsy for precancerous oral lesions, which may be able to identify and diagnose oral cancer earlier.

Clinical services for oral cancer include:

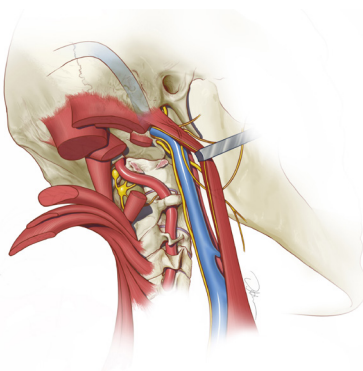
- Utilization of molecular biomarkers to pinpoint aggressive malignancies
- Clinical trial options, such as comparing sentinel node biopsy to standard neck dissection for early-stage oral cancer
- An Oral Cancer Prevention Clinic for patients with precancerous lesions that provides a quantitative assessment for high-grade pre-cancer or cancer, continued monitoring and treatment
- A team of oral oncologists, maxillofacial prosthodontists, and plastic and reconstructive surgeons to provide oral and dental assessments, prophylaxis, and rehabilitation of complicated intraoral and facial defects

## Skull Base Tumors

MD Anderson is one of the few cancer centers in the country with a specialized program for tumors of the skull base. Our program joins together experts from the Head and Neck Center and the Brain and Spine Center, which has nearly 75 years of experience diagnosing and treating brain tumors, spine tumors and skull base tumors. Surgeries in this delicate and complex area are performed with sophisticated, less-invasive technologies to provide patients the most successful treatment with the least impact on physical and mental function.

Clinical services for skull base tumors include:

- Utilization of both open and minimally invasive diagnostic and surgical approaches
- Novel treatment therapies and minimally invasion endoscopic skull base surgery that result in fewer extreme surgeries and shorter recovery times
- Clinical trial options, such as induction chemotherapy and re-irradiation, for advanced skull base tumors
- Complex facial reconstruction and orbital rehabilitation to restore normal function and correct the physical changes caused by cancer-related treatments



**Listen to Ann Gillenwater, M.D.,**  
discuss tongue cancer  
diagnosis, treatment and  
side effects.



**Watch Ehab Hanna, M.D.,**  
discuss skull base surgery.



**Watch Shirley Su, MBBS,**  
discuss skull base surgery.

## Skin Cancer

At MD Anderson's Melanoma and Skin Center, we evaluate more than 10,000 melanoma patients each year. As one of the most active skin cancer treatment programs in the nation, we offer several innovative treatments for melanoma, squamous cell carcinoma and basal cell carcinoma.

Clinical services for skin cancer include:

- Immunotherapies, such as anti-CTLA-4, anti-PD-L1, hedgehog pathway inhibitor, interferon-alpha, interleukin 2 intratumoral injection of TVEC, T cell, vaccines and biochemotherapy
- Targeted therapies, such as B-RAF and KIT inhibitors
- Minimally invasive lymphatic mapping and sentinel node biopsy
- Clinical trial options for melanoma, squamous cell carcinoma and basal cell carcinoma



**Listen to Sapna Patel, M.D.**, discuss immunotherapy and melanoma.

## Thyroid Cancer

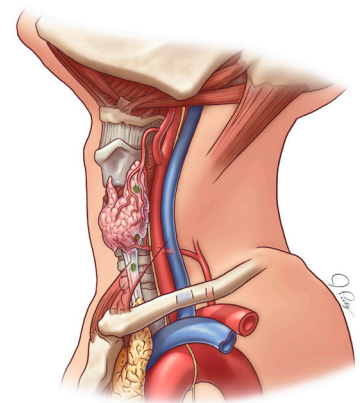
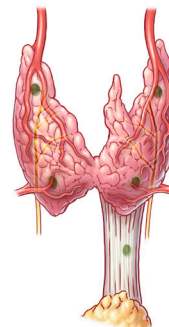
MD Anderson's Endocrine Center has one of the highest volume multidisciplinary thyroid cancer epicenters in the nation, which has accelerated our extensive surgical experience of the thyroid and parathyroid glands. Our thyroid center provides high-definition ultrasound, expert cytopathologic review of biopsy specimens, and consultation with thyroid surgeons for patients with well-differentiated or undifferentiated thyroid cancer tumors.

Clinical services for thyroid cancer include:

- A Thyroid Nodule Clinic to evaluate suspicious thyroid nodules
- A dedicated Anaplastic Thyroid Cancer Clinic with a Facilitating Anaplastic Thyroid Cancer Specialized Treatment Team (FAST) to provide patients with an accurate diagnosis and begin immediate treatment for this very rare and aggressive disease
- Multiple clinical trial options in rare and aggressive forms of thyroid cancer, including medullary thyroid cancer, anaplastic thyroid cancer, and radioactive-iodine refractory differentiated thyroid cancer



**Watch Mark Zafereo, M.D.**, discuss thyroid cancer, including surgery and recurrence.



# Head and Neck Oncology

## Supportive Care

MD Anderson’s [Speech Pathology and Audiology](#) section is recognized around the world for the comprehensive evaluation and management of communication, swallowing and hearing disorders in cancer patients. Clinical services for speech pathology and audiology include:

- [Assessment](#) and rehabilitation for swallowing disorders with [proactive therapy](#), laryngectomy, voice disorders, language disorders, cognitive-communicative impairments, hearing disorders, vestibular and balance function, and trismus

MD Anderson’s highly recognized [Oral Oncology and Maxillofacial Prosthodontics](#) section is the oldest accredited program in the United States for advanced oral rehabilitation and management of oral complications of cancer treatment. Clinical services for oral oncology and maxillofacial prosthodontics include:

- Rehabilitation for patients with complex maxillofacial intraoral and facial prosthodontics

MD Anderson’s [Ophthalmology Clinic](#) is one of only a few in the region to provide full-time ocular oncologists that specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of ocular, orbital and ocular adnexal malignancies. Clinical services for ophthalmology include:

- Complete ophthalmic and neuro-ophthalmic care for patients with cancer, as well as ocular complications from cancer therapy



**Watch Katherine Hutcheson, Ph.D.,** discuss proactive swallowing therapy.



**Listen to Mark Chambers, D.M.D.,** discuss oral health and cancer treatment.

## Cancer survivorship starts with a diagnosis.

Patients have three different cancer phases they experience; living through, living with and living beyond cancer. MD Anderson’s survivorship clinics have a set of tailored guidelines with potential treatments and late effects for specific disease sites.

To learn more about these guidelines, visit our [Clinical Practice Algorithms](#) page.

## Oncology care team

For information about our head and neck oncology faculty and staff, visit our [directory](#).

## A safer environment

Keeping our patients and workforce safe has always been our top priority. We continue to proactively implement measures to ensure the safety of patients on all of our campuses. To learn more about our response to COVID-19, visit our [Coronavirus Precautions](#) page.

**30%**

increased survival

**50%**

reduction in feeding tubes

**18+**

head and neck surgeons

**13+**

head and neck medical oncologists

**11+**

radiation oncologists

**20+**

plastic surgeons

**50,000+**

5 locations

**PATIENTS TREATED ANNUALLY**

## Connect with us.

### Cancer center locations

When you refer to MD Anderson, your patients will receive the highest level of care in a safe, compassionate environment. We provide head and neck cancer services at multiple locations across Houston, making it easy and convenient for your patients, including:

- Texas Medical Center
- MD Anderson League City
- MD Anderson in Sugar Land
- MD Anderson The Woodlands
- MD Anderson West Houston

Learn more about each of our [locations](#) and their offerings to find the most convenient one for your patient.

### Patient referrals

Our [Referring Provider Team](#) is dedicated to assisting health care providers with the following:

- Referrals to any MD Anderson center or location
- Continuous follow-up on the status of referrals
- Answers to questions about patient access procedures
- Support with our online physician portal



**Health Care Provider Resource Center**

### Physician portal

Our secure, HIPAA-compliant portal is available for health care providers to take an active role in managing patient care at MD Anderson. After creating a [myMDAnderson](#) for Physicians account, you can:

- Access patient appointment schedules
- Access transcribed patient reports and results
- Receive notifications regarding referral status and results
- Easily update your profile and contact information

### Referring Provider Team



Phone: 877-632-6789



Fax: 713-563-2449

Monday-Friday: 8 a.m.-11 p.m.

Saturday-Sunday: 8 a.m.-7 p.m.

[physicianreferrals@mdanderson.org](mailto:physicianreferrals@mdanderson.org)

**Learn more about how to [refer a patient](#).**

