**Advice for Newly Diagnosed Patients**

- Find an oncologist and healthcare team you trust.
- Ask about clinical trials.
- Find support specialists, including:
  - Speech and language pathologists
  - Dental care experts
  - Occupational therapists

**Factors That Impact Treatment Decisions**

- Type and subtype of head and neck cancer
- Location of the tumor
- Extent and stage of disease
- Patient-specific factors, such as: age, overall health, previous treatment, co-existing conditions
- Genetic mutations, tumor markers, and immune markers

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**Glossary Terms**

**Biomarker Testing (molecular testing):** Laboratory testing that identifies certain genes, proteins, or other molecules in a sample of tissue, blood, or other body fluid. In cancer, it may also be used to evaluate treatment or to make a prognosis.

**Circulating Tumor DNA:** DNA found in the bloodstream from tumors and cancerous cells.

**Clinical Trials:** A research study that evaluates how newer approaches work in human subjects. Also called a clinical study, trials can test methods of preventing, screening, diagnosing, or treating a disease.

**Gene Mutation:** A permanent change in the DNA sequence that makes up a gene. Mutations can be acquired or inherited and may impact treatment choices.

**Immunotherapy:** Type of therapy that harnesses one’s own immune system to help the body fight cancer, infection, and other diseases.

**Palliative Care:** Specialized medical care focused on relieving pain and symptoms of patients living with a serious illness. Palliative care aims to improve the quality of life for both the patient and the family.

**Shared Decision-Making (SDM):** Process of communication by which patients and clinicians collaborate to make healthcare decisions. The process encourages patients to take a more active role in their care and treatment.

**PET (Positron Emission Tomography) Scan:** Imaging test that uses a special dye with radioactive tracers to allow your doctor to check for diseases in your body.

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**Head and Neck Cancer Resources**

- CancerGRACE: cancergrace.org
- Cure: curetoday.com
- Cancer Support Community: cancersupportcommunity.org
- Head and Neck Cancer Alliance: headandneck.org
- National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD): rarediseases.org

**Types of Head and Neck Cancer**

- Squamous cell carcinoma
- Salivary gland cancers
- Skull-based tumors
- Midline and peri-sinus cancers

**Squamous cell cancer subtypes:**

- HPV-positive (human papilloma virus)
- HPV-negative

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