Head, neck cancers are on the rise

Dr. KW Hillis

Smoking, drinking, HPV cause higher risk of oral, throat cancers

The number of cancers that have HPV-associated DNA in them, are massively on the rise, has to do with people's changing sexual habits.

There are many structures in the head and neck that are not amenable to (surgery),” Tool said. “There is a lot of radiation, which can affect the structures of the face, and surrounding normal tissues to make post-treatment radiation a potentially dangerous issue. Which is why we have many different ways to treat head and neck cancer.

As to screening, Dr. Najera said, “there are some patients that you see who have had head or neck cancer and (the tumors) were small enough that... may re-appear, that you don’t see a surgical screening, including the early parts of the jaw (or other structures).”

“Screening is impossible to do. The standard of care is the early detection of the cancer, whether that is in the neck or is small enough, you see radiation therapy, which is the only way, the new.”

The prognosis or projected outcome of the cancer depends on the stage of the cancer, but the cause he said, “healing,” meaning that if a person has a low risk of recurrence, a good prognosis is possible.

Dr. Paula Teel, an ENT surgeon at Fitch Cancer Center will be holding the screenings with Doctors Stephen and Timothy Kaiser of ENT Fitch Cancer Center Wednesday. Teel will be one of four doctors who will serve free screening, by appointment, for oral, throat and neck cancer at the Leah M. Ear, Nose & Throat Institute Wednesday. Teel will be one of four doctors who will offer free screening, by appointment, for oral, throat and neck cancer at the Leah M. Ear, Nose & Throat Institute, 104 NW 31st Street, in Oklahoma City.

The screening will be open to anyone who feels a lump in their head or neck, or to anyone for whom abnormalities are noted during a routine physical examination, or to someone who notes anything unusual during a routine physical examination. People should call the screening center before attending the screening.

The screening will look at the person’s face to see if there is a lump in the neck, or if there is any abnormality in the mouth or throat. The head and neck cancers are found in the structures that make up the oral cavity, the head and neck.

The three top risk factors that can lead to head and neck cancer are smoking, alcohol and the HPV virus, according to the NCI, which has a list of other factors including poor oral hygiene and poor diet.

One of the most important messages to get across is that people should lower their own risks, Najera said, “it’s a disease of a lifestyle.”

Another way to lower risk of head and neck cancer is to lower your risk of HPV-related head and neck cancer, and this can be done with an HPV vaccine.

For information about head and neck cancer and about ongoing cancer screening, call the Leah’s most important messages to get across is that people should lower their own risks, Najera said, “it’s a disease of a lifestyle.”

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