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Opinion Article

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Advances in Neck Oncology: Current Trends and Future Directions

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Description

Neck oncology is a specialized field that deals with the diagnosis and treatment of cancerous growths in the neck. The neck is a complex region of the body that contains many vital structures, including the thyroid gland, parathyroid glands, lymph nodes, blood vessels, larynx, pharynx, and windpipe. Due to the complexity of the neck, the diagnosis and treatment of neck cancer can be challenging. This manuscript aims to provide an overview of the diagnosis and treatment of neck cancer.

Types of neck cancer

There are several different types of neck cancer, including thyroid cancer, salivary gland cancer, lymphoma, nasopharyngeal cancer, oropharyngeal cancer, and hypopharyngeal cancer. Thyroid cancer is the most common type of neck cancer and affects the thyroid gland, which is responsible for producing hormones that regulate metabolism. Salivary gland cancer is a rare type of neck cancer that affects the glands that produce saliva. Lymphoma is a type of cancer that affects the lymphatic system, which comprises lymph nodes and vessels that help to fight infections. Nasopharyngeal, oropharyngeal,

and hypopharyngeal cancer all affect the throat and can cause difficulty swallowing, hoarseness, and other symptoms.

Symptoms of neck cancer: The symptoms of neck cancer can vary widely depending on the type and stage of cancer. Some common symptoms of neck cancer include a lump or swelling in the neck, difficulty swallowing or speaking, persistent cough, hoarseness, and unexplained weight loss. In some cases, neck cancer may not cause any symptoms until it has advanced to a later stage.

Diagnosis of neck cancer: The diagnosis of neck cancer typically involves a physical exam, imaging tests such as CT scan, MRI, or PET scan, and a biopsy. During a physical exam, the doctor will examine the neck for any lumps or swelling. Imaging tests can help to determine the size and location of the cancerous growth. A biopsy is a procedure in which a small sample of tissue is taken and examined under a microscope to determine if it is cancerous.

Treatment of neck cancer: The treatment of neck cancer depends on the type and stage of cancer. Surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, and targeted therapy are the most common forms of treatment. Surgery may be used to remove the cancerous growth, while radiation therapy and chemotherapy are used to kill cancer cells. Targeted therapy is a newer form of treatment that uses drugs to target specific proteins or genes that are involved in the growth and spread of cancer cells.

Impact on quality of life: Neck cancer and its treatment can have a significant impact on a person's quality of life. Treatment can cause side effects such as pain, difficulty swallowing, and changes in speech. Rehabilitation and support services can help manage these side effects and improve quality of life.

Neck oncology is a complex field that requires a multidisciplinary approach to diagnosis and treatment. Early detection and treatment can improve outcomes and quality of life for people with neck cancer. It is important to consult a healthcare professional if the person experience any symptoms of neck cancer. With proper diagnosis and treatment, many people with neck cancer can successfully manage their condition and live a good quality of life.

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