



# Head and Neck Cancer Program

The Head and Neck Cancer Program at Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center provides comprehensive, highly personalized medical and surgical treatment of patients with benign and malignant tumors of the skin, salivary glands, oral cavity, pharynx, larynx, thyroid and parathyroid glands. The program's goal is the eradication of cancer with a minimum of side effects for the patient.

Patients have immediate access to multidisciplinary expertise including oncologic and reconstructive surgery, medical oncology, radiation therapy, oral surgery, pathology, neuroradiology, nuclear medicine, pain management, speech therapy, voice restoration and nutrition services. Following the removal of large tumors, we offer the possibility of immediate reconstruction by a fellowship-trained facial and plastic reconstructive surgeon affiliated with the program, with attention to both function and cosmetic considerations.

The program is a collaborative effort between Memorial Hermann-TMC and the department of Otorhinolaryngology at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) Medical School, offering state-of-the-art care for patients with tumors of the head and neck. Patients have immediate access to new medical and surgical therapies, including organ-preservation therapy using chemotherapy and radiation, minimally invasive thyroid and parathyroid surgery, robotic thyroidectomy, transoral laser microsurgery (TLM) and transoral robotic surgery (TORS). Those who qualify have the opportunity to participate in clinical trials of treatments not otherwise available.

The program's team of specialists has expertise in all aspects of cancer care. Referred patients are evaluated by an affiliated head and neck oncologic surgeon who is board certified in otorhinolaryngology. Workups include radiology services performed by dedicated faculty in the departments of Nuclear Medicine and Neuroradiology. Cases are evaluated and discussed by a multidisciplinary Head and Neck Tumor Board.

## Highlights

- Highly personalized and comprehensive care under one roof
- Convenient parking connected to the hospital
- Focus on the least-invasive treatment
- State-of-the-art care using organ-preservation therapy
- Surgical and nonsurgical options for treatment
- Minimally invasive and robotic-assisted surgery options
- Multidisciplinary management of malignancies
- Strong focus on functional and cosmetic outcomes, as well as quality of life
- Supported by the full array of services available at Memorial Hermann-TMC
- Thorough evaluation by head and neck oncologic surgeons who are board certified in otorhinolaryngology
- Case discussion by the program's multidisciplinary Head and Neck Tumor Board
- Second-opinion consultations
- Immediate access to new medical and surgical therapies available at a tertiary care medical center
- Access to clinical trials

(over)

## Scope of Expertise

- Malignancies of the tongue
- Diseases and neoplasms of the oral cavity (lips, gums, and soft and hard palates)
- Diseases and neoplasms of the oropharynx (soft palate, tonsils and tongue base)
- Diseases and neoplasms of the throat and voice box (pharynx, larynx, trachea)
- Diseases and neoplasms of the nose and paranasal sinuses
- Malignancies of the thyroid and parathyroid
- All other types of head and neck cancer
- Treatment of the secondary effects of surgery, radiation and chemotherapy

## Treatment

The program is committed to innovation in the treatment of complex malignancies and to close collaboration with referring physicians. Once a diagnosis has been made, we have at our disposal the most advanced treatment options available, including state-of-the-art medical therapy and surgery using minimally invasive techniques whenever possible.

## Reconstructive Surgery

The program's facial and plastic reconstructive surgeon offers specialized procedures and services for the repair of facial and head/neck deformities resulting from tumor removal and skin cancer excision. Their ability to perform microvascular free-tissue transfer allows them to reconstruct the most complex of secondary facial defects, with the goal of achieving maximal restoration and improving patients' self-confidence.

## Innovation and Robotics

Approved by the FDA in December 2009 for transoral robotic surgery (TORS) for resection of tumors of the tongue and throat, the *da Vinci*<sup>®</sup> Surgical System offers advantages beyond traditional surgical approaches to the throat, especially in the region of the tonsils and tongue base. Rather than having to divide the lower lip or divide the mandible in the midline, surgeons can approach these tumors directly through the mouth using the *da Vinci* robot. The robot's camera allows for visualization around structures such as the tongue, providing a highly magnified three-dimensional view.

## Patient-Centered Care

The program's philosophy of patient-centered care includes respect for each patient's values, preferences and expressed needs; the coordination and integration of care; communication and education; physical comfort and emotional support; and the involvement of family and friends in the treatment and recovery process.

## Research

The value of bench research and clinical trials in advancing quality of care and improving outcomes is undisputed. From the patient perspective, participation in a clinical trial carries controlled risks and offers significant advantages in terms of very close and personalized long-term follow-up. It also offers treatment options that would otherwise be unavailable.

As the primary teaching hospital for the UTHealth Medical School, Memorial Hermann-TMC is positioned on the frontier of medicine, creating innovative programs of care, engaging in leading-edge research and promoting education, all of which improve human health and wellbeing.

## Meet the Head and Neck Cancer Treatment Team



### **Tang Ho, M.D., M.Sc.**

Board-Certified Otolaryngologist  
Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery  
Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center

Assistant Professor of Facial Plastic and  
Reconstructive Surgery  
Department of Otorhinolaryngology-Head and  
Neck Surgery  
UTHealth Medical School

**Medical School:** Johns Hopkins University School  
of Medicine

**Residency:** Baylor College of Medicine

**Fellowship:** Johns Hopkins University School  
of Medicine (Facial Plastic and Reconstructive  
Surgery)

**Clinical Interests:** Aesthetic and reconstructive  
surgeries of the face; rhinoplasty; microvascular  
free-tissue transfer for head and neck  
reconstruction; facial reanimation procedures  
for patients with facial paralysis; reconstructive  
surgery of facial skin cancer defects



### **Ron J. Karni, M.D.**

Board-Certified Otolaryngologist  
Head and Neck Surgical Oncology  
Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center

Assistant Professor of Otorhinolaryngology-Head  
and Neck Surgery  
Department of Otorhinolaryngology-Head and  
Neck Surgery  
UTHealth Medical School

**Medical School:** Baylor College of Medicine

**Residency:** Washington University School of  
Medicine

**Clinical Interests:** Head and neck oncologic  
surgery; robotic-assisted and minimally invasive  
surgery, including transoral robotic surgery  
(TORS); management of thyroid and parathyroid  
disorders, including diagnostic ultrasonography;  
treatment of salivary gland disorders; surgery of  
the nose and paranasal sinuses; and evaluation  
of voice and swallowing problems



### **Etan Weinstock, M.D.**

Board-Certified Otolaryngologist  
Head and Neck Surgical Oncology  
Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center

Assistant Professor of Otorhinolaryngology-Head  
and Neck Surgery  
Department of Otorhinolaryngology-Head and  
Neck Surgery  
UTHealth Medical School

**Medical School:** Albert Einstein College of  
Medicine

**Residency:** UTHealth Medical School

**Fellowship:** The University of Texas System MD  
Anderson Cancer Center (Head and Neck Surgical  
Oncology)

**Clinical Interests:** Head and neck oncologic  
surgery; minimally invasive surgery including  
transoral robotic surgery (TORS); surgery of  
the nose and paranasal sinuses; thyroid and  
parathyroid disorders; salivary gland cancers; skin  
cancer surgery; improving functional outcomes  
after surgical and nonsurgical treatments of  
head and neck cancers; minimally invasive  
treatments for head and neck cancers; and organ  
preservation protocols for selected cancers

## Current Issues in Otorhinolaryngology

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For more information about the department, visit [ut-ent.org](http://ut-ent.org)**



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