

Head and Neck Surgery Division

Introduction

Surgical treatment for head and neck cancer demands the fulfillment of two contradictory requirements: the resection must be large enough to eradicate all the cancer cells but small enough to preserve important functions such as swallowing, speech, vision, and cosmetic appearance. The Head and Neck Surgery Division resolves these conflicting requirements mainly via two distinct approaches: conservation surgery and extensive resection with microsurgical reconstruction. Conservation surgery has been the most successful in voice preservation; vertical partial laryngectomy is indicated for T1/T2 glottic carcinoma, recurrent glottic carcinoma after radiotherapy and some cases of early false cord carcinoma. Laryngeal preservation is also possible in T1/T2 hypopharyngeal carcinoma with limited extension. The other approach, extensive resection with microsurgical reconstruction, is designed to minimize loss of function after ablative surgery by microsurgical transfer of various flaps. Please consult the Plastic Surgery Division of this annual

report for further details.

Routine Activities

Multimodal therapy is the core of current treatment policies for head and neck cancer. To conduct therapies effectively, five staff surgeons at this Division consistently work with plastic surgeons, radiotherapists, medical oncologists, dentists, psycho-oncologists, nurses and other hospital staff. Several weekly conferences are held to facilitate constant communication among members of this large team.

In 2006, 328 new patients were treated at this Division. Thanks to recent advances in surgical techniques and perioperative care, the number of surgical treatments for high-risk patients, including elderly patients over 80, is increasing. Technically difficult operations, such as surgical resection of advanced oropharyngeal carcinoma with immediate reconstruction, are also increasing in number.

● M. Saikawa ●

Number of operations under general anesthesia in 2002-2006

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
	590	595	505	415	519

Number of new patients in 2002-2006

Primary site	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Tongue	65	71	65	60	33
Oral cavity, excluding the tongue	58	59	72	57	58
Larynx	53	67	60	50	36
Nasopharynx	22	18	18	15	13
Oropharynx	40	35	45	35	39
Hypopharynx and cervical esophagus	80	81	80	63	64
Nasal cavity and paranasal sinuses	30	25	23	16	24
Thyroid gland	51	53	61	46	35
Major salivary glands	24	17	21	7	10
Others	18	20	21	24	16
Total	441	446	466	373	328