Nasal Cavity and Paranasal Sinus Cancer - After Treatment

This section has been reviewed and approved by the Cancer.Net Editorial Board [1], August / 2013

After Treatment

ON THIS PAGE: You will read about your medical care after cancer treatment is finished and why this follow-up care is important. To see other pages in this guide, use the colored boxes on the right side of your screen, or click ?Next? at the bottom.

After treatment for nasal cavity or paranasal sinus cancer ends, talk with your doctor about developing a follow-up care plan. This plan may include regular physical examinations and/or medical tests to monitor your recovery for the coming months and years.

ASCO offers cancer treatment summary forms [2] to help keep track of the cancer treatment you received and develop a survivorship care plan once treatment is completed.

If the cancer recurs, it most commonly happens in the first two or three years after diagnosis, so follow-up visits will be more frequent during the first two or three years. Diagnostic examinations, such as CT scans, may be needed to watch for any signs of recurrences or monitor how well the current treatment is working.

Rehabilitation [3] is a major part of follow-up care after head and neck cancer treatment. People may receive physical therapy and speech therapy to regain skills, such as talking and swallowing. Supportive care to manage symptoms and maintain nutrition during and after treatment [4] may be recommended. Some people may need to learn new ways to eat or to eat foods prepared differently. After surgery, a prosthodontist can help in the restoration and rehabilitation of any oral cavity structures that were removed during surgery.

Rehabilitation of physical changes resulting from a maxillectomy often requires a prosthesis. Prevention of dental decay by fluoride application is very important to avoid loss of existing teeth. Special eye care may also be necessary. When a maxillectomy is done, in many cases, fluid will accumulate in the middle ear on the side of surgery, and a myringotomy (surgery to the eardrum) to drain this fluid may be required. Very frequently, especially after craniofacial resection, people will lose their anosmia (sense of smell), and it is important that these people receive special coping strategies, especially around the house and work area (in case of chemical spills, smoke from a fire, and other situations). If the person has received radiation therapy, he or she should avoid exposing the skin that received treatment to the sun. If radiation therapy included the neck, the person should have his or her thyroid gland checked regularly through blood tests.

People may look different, feel tired, and be unable to talk or eat the way they used to. Many people experience depression [5]. The health care team can help people cope with these physical and emotional changes and connect them with support services. Support groups may help people cope with changes following treatment.

People recovering from nasal cavity or paranasal sinus cancer are encouraged to follow established guidelines for good health, such as maintaining a healthy weight, not smoking, limiting alcohol consumption, eating a balanced diet, and having recommended cancer screening tests. Talk with your doctor to develop a plan that is best for your needs. Moderate physical activity can help rebuild your strength and energy level. Your doctor can help you create an appropriate exercise plan based upon your needs, physical abilities, and fitness level. Learn more about the next steps to take in survivorship [6], including making positive lifestyle changes [7].

To continue reading this guide, choose ?Next? (below, right) for a list of questions you may want to ask your doctor. Or, use the colored boxes located on the right side of your screen to visit any section.

Links:
[1] http://www.cancer.net/about-us
[2] http://www.cancer.net/node/25394
[3] http://www.cancer.net/node/25397
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