

Nasopharyngeal Cancer - Symptoms and Signs [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board](#) [2], 01/2014

ON THIS PAGE: You will find out more about body changes and other things that can signal a problem that may need medical care. To see other pages, use the menu on the side of your screen.

People with NPC may experience the following symptoms or signs. Sometimes, people with NPC do not show any of these symptoms. Or, these symptoms may be caused by a medical condition that is not cancer.

- A lump in the neck (the most common symptom)
- Nasal obstruction or stuffiness
- Trouble hearing, hearing loss, and/or a sense of fullness or pain in the ear that is caused by a buildup of fluid in the middle ear (serous otitis media, caused by blockage of the Eustachian tube), especially if persistent and occurring in just one ear
- Pain and ringing in the ear
- A sore throat that doesn't seem to go away
- Trouble breathing or speaking
- Frequent nose bleeds
- Pain, numbness, or paralysis in the face
- Frequent headaches
- Difficulty opening the mouth
- Blurred or double vision
- Fatigue
- Unexplained weight loss

People who notice any of these symptoms should talk with a doctor and/or dentist right away. Your doctor will ask how long and how often you've been experiencing the symptom(s), in addition to other questions. This is to help find out the cause of the problem, called a [diagnosis](#) [3]. When detected early, cancer of the head and neck has a much better chance of cure.

Because many of these symptoms can be caused by other noncancerous conditions as well, it is important to receive regular health and dental screenings; this is particularly important for people who routinely drink alcohol or currently use tobacco products or have used them in the past. People who use alcohol and tobacco should receive a general screening examination at least once a year. This is a simple, quick procedure in which the doctor looks in the nose, mouth, and

throat for abnormalities and feels for lumps in the neck. If anything unusual is found, then the doctor will recommend a more extensive examination using one or more of the diagnostic procedures mentioned in the [Diagnosis](#) [3] section.

If cancer is diagnosed, relieving symptoms remains an important part of cancer care and treatment. This may also be called symptom management, palliative care, or supportive care. Be sure to talk with your health care team about symptoms you experience, including any new symptoms or a change in symptoms.

The next section helps explain what tests and scans may be needed to learn more about the cause of the symptoms. Use the menu on the side of your screen to select [Diagnosis](#), or you can select another section, to continue reading this guide.

Links:

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/nasopharyngeal-cancer/symptoms-and-signs>

[2] <http://www.cancer.net/about-us>

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/node/19414>