

Increased risk for head, neck cancers in patients with diabetes

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Diabetes mellitus (DM) appears to increase the risk for head and neck cancer (HNC). Evidence suggests certain cancers are more common in people with DM, but the risk of HNC in patients with DM has not been well explored. Overall, head and neck cancer is the sixth most common type of cancer. It accounts for about 6 percent of all cases and for an estimated 650,000 new cancer cases and 350,000 cancer deaths worldwide each year.

The authors used Taiwan's Longitudinal Health Insurance Research Database to examine the risk of HNC in patients with DM. The authors compared 89,089 patients newly diagnosed with diabetes and control patients without DM-related claims in 2011.

The incidence of HNC was 1.47 times higher in patients newly diagnosed with DM. In the group with diabetes, 634 patients had HNC (rate of 8.07 per 10,000 person-years) and, in the non-[diabetes](#) group, 447 patients had HNC (rate of 5.50 per 10,000 person years). HNC in the oral cavity had the highest incidence at 0.41 percent. The incidence in the oropharynx was 0.06 percent and 0.11 percent in the nasopharynx. HNC incidence also was higher in patients with DM who were 40 to 65 years old than among patients in the control group without DM who were the same age.

"Because we adequately controlled for the confounding factors, our findings disclose a higher incidence of HNC in patients with DM and highlight the importance of monitoring patients with DM for HNC."

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