Shorter duration of feeding tube placement with IMRT

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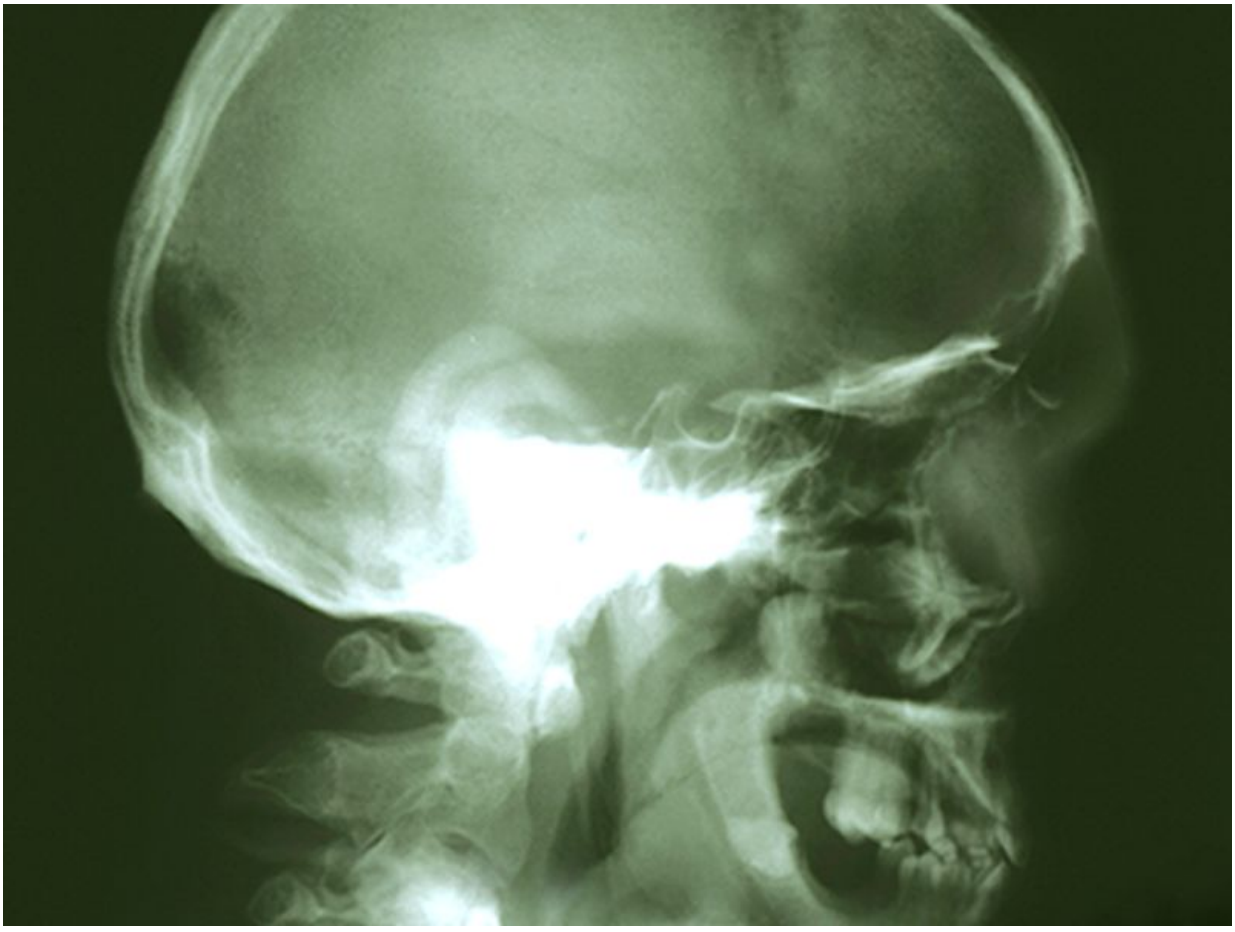

(HealthDay)—For patients with head and neck cancer (HNC), the

duration of feeding tube placement is shorter for those who receive definitive intensity-modulated radiation therapy (IMRT) compared with those who receive three-dimensional radiation therapy (3DRT), according to a study published online Sept. 23 in *Cancer*.

Beth M. Beadle, M.D., Ph.D., from the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, and colleagues used the linked Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results-Medicare database to determine the cohort, demographics, and cancer-related variables for patients with HNC. Treatment details were analyzed using claims data.

The researchers identified 2,993 patients. Overall, 54.4 percent of patients had ever had a feeding tube placed at a median follow-up of 47 months, with a median duration of 277 days from feeding tube placement to removal. The rates of feeding tube placement were similar for patients who received IMRT and 3DRT (odds ratio, 1.10; P = 0.35); patients who received 3DRT had a feeding tube in place for significantly longer than those who received IMRT (1.18 times longer; P = 0.03). The difference was only seen for patients who received definitive RT; no significant difference was seen in feeding tube placement or duration for patients who underwent surgery and received adjuvant RT.

"These data suggest that there may be significant quality-of-life benefits to IMRT with respect to long-term swallowing function in patients with HNC," the authors write.

More information: Abstract
Full Text (subscription or payment may be required)

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