

# High CVD risk in patients with head, neck squamous cell cancer

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(HealthDay)—Twenty-three percent of patients with head and neck

squamous cell carcinoma (HNSCC) have cardiovascular disease (CVD) at diagnosis, and 24 percent have uncontrolled blood pressure, according to research published online Dec. 29 in *Head & Neck*.

Christian C. Okoye, M.D., from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, and colleagues retrospectively reviewed patients with HNSCC who underwent definitive or adjuvant (chemo)radiation between 2011 and 2013. The authors calculated the 10-year risk estimates for a [cardiovascular disease](#) event according to the Framingham Risk Score (FRS).

One hundred fifteen patients with mainly stage III/IV HNSCC were followed up for a median of two years. The researchers found that 23 percent of patients had CVD at diagnosis. Patients with laryngeal cancer had higher FRS than those with cancer at other sites (20.5 versus 14.4 percent). At diagnosis, 24 percent of all patients had uncontrolled blood pressure. Forty-one and 30 percent of patients with CVD were not taking antiplatelet [therapy](#) or statin therapy, respectively. Indications for initiating [statin therapy](#) were seen for 34 percent of [patients](#) with CVD.

"Patients with HNSCC have a high baseline CVD risk and many do not receive optimal preventive care," the authors write.

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