

Head & Neck Cancer: What the Radiologist Provides

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The radiologist plays an integral role in the pre and post treatment assessment of the head and neck cancer patient. While describing every aspect of this role is beyond the scope any single presentation, the bottom line is that our goal is to provide the information not otherwise readily evaluable by the clinician. This includes but is not limited to the following, which will form the structure of my presentation: a) determining if there is a primary malignancy in those presenting with metastatic cervical lymphadenopathy or other clinical evidence of potential malignancy, but for whom a primary is clinically occult, b) determining the location, extent/stage, and if possible predict the probable histology of such malignancy including the extent of nodal disease, if any, and c) in the post treatment setting, assess efficacy of therapy, detect residual or recurrent disease, and diagnose treatment-related complications while distinguishing them from recurrence. This presentation will not address the vast opportunities for error and misdiagnosis that is attendant to the stated goals, for which a 2x longer presentation would be required just to scratch the surface.