

Nasopharyngeal Cancer is common among Chinese

Nasopharyngeal cancer (NPC) is common in Southern China. Compared with other countries, the incidence rate of NPC is high among Chinese, particularly people who live in southern China. With the advancement of treatment, the recovery rate of early stage of NPC can be as high as 95%. Those patients can work again after recovery. Therefore, the earlier stage of the disease can be detected, the better chance of recovery.

Nasopharyngeal cancer is a tumor that develops in the nasopharynx, an area in the back of the nose conjunct with the throat. Early symptoms are not apparent, so the disease is often not duly treated. The etiology of NPC still remains unknown, though a number of factors have been identified as associated with an increased risk, including Chinese, family history of NPC, the infection of Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) and high fat and salt dietary. Common symptoms of NPC include a lump in the neck, nasal bleeding, hearing problem, earache, tinnitus, blocked nose, headache, facial numbness, difficulty of swallowing, losing weight and tiredness.

The most common screening method of NPC is examining the EBV serology in blood serum. Besides, doctors will use endoscope to check the nasopharynx, and establish the diagnosis by biopsy. Radiotherapy is the primary treatment for NPC, which use high energy x-rays to kill cancerous cells. Chemotherapy and radiotherapy will be used at the same time for those patients with advanced cancer. For prevention, salted fish and vegetables, preserved food, smoking and alcoholic should be avoided. If any symptom is detected, especially if lymph node in the neck persists for more than 2 weeks, medical advice should be sought.