

DR. KONDAMUDI DHEERAJ

Enhancing Oncology Care with Advanced Technology & Research



Dr. Kondamudi Dheeraj
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The field of head and neck oncology has witnessed a remarkable transformation over the years, evolving from a limited branch of ENT into a highly specialized and multidisciplinary domain. Advancements in surgical techniques, technology, and collaborative care have redefined treatment outcomes, placing equal emphasis on cure and quality of life. This dynamic evolution has paved the way for dedicated specialists who bring precision and compassion to patient care, a journey that is strongly reflected in the work and expertise of Dr. Kondamudi Dheeraj.

From Foundations to Focus

Dr. Dheeraj's academic journey began with a Master of Surgery in Otorhinolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery from Kasturba Medical College, Manipal. It was during the junior residency that he encountered a high volume of head and neck cancer cases, which played a defining role in shaping his career path. What was once perceived as a field limited to ear, nose, and throat disorders had already begun expanding into subspecialties such as laryngology, rhinology, and most notably, head and neck oncology.

This early exposure laid a strong foundation and sparked a deeper interest in understanding the complexities of cancer affecting visible and functionally critical areas of the body. Recognizing the need for advanced expertise, Dr. Dheeraj pursued further training, including a fellowship in head and neck surgical oncology at Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai, widely regarded as a leading cancer institute in Asia. He later advanced his skills through superspecialty training at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, where he gained extensive experience in managing complex oncological cases. He is

currently serving as a Senior Consultant at Apollo Cancer Centre, Visakhapatnam.

Navigating Complexity in Patient Care

Head and neck cancers encompass a wide range of conditions, including cancers of the oral cavity, pharynx, larynx, thyroid, salivary glands, and even the skull base. Treating these conditions requires not only oncological precision but also a deep understanding of anatomy and function. Unlike many other cancers, the impact of treatment in this region is immediately visible and directly affects essential activities such as speech, swallowing, and breathing.

One of the defining challenges in this field lies in balancing complete cancer removal with the preservation of quality of life. "Surgical interventions must ensure that patients retain as much normal function as possible, making every decision critical. Achieving both oncological safety and functional restoration is essential, so patients can return to their daily lives with confidence and dignity," explains Dr. Kondamudi Dheeraj.

The complexity of these cases also necessitates a collaborative approach. Multidisciplinary teamwork plays a vital role, involving radiation oncologists, medical oncologists, reconstructive surgeons, radiologists, pathologists, and speech-language therapists. Regular tumor board discussions enable comprehensive evaluation and tailored treatment planning, ensuring that each patient receives the most effective and personalized care.

Innovation and the Rise of Minimally Invasive Techniques

Technological advancements have significantly redefined



surgical practices in head and neck oncology, and Dr. Dheeraj has been actively integrating these innovations into his work. Robotic surgery, in particular, has emerged as a gamechanger, allowing surgeons to perform complex procedures with enhanced precision while minimizing visible scars and recovery time.



Dr. Kondamudi Dheeraj believes that true success in head and neck oncology lies in curing cancer while preserving function, confidence, and quality of life

Traditional approaches often required large incisions, especially in procedures like neck dissections or thyroid

surgeries. However, robotic techniques now enable surgeons to access affected areas through smaller, concealed entry points such as the chest or armpit. This not only improves cosmetic outcomes but also accelerates recovery, enabling patients to resume normal activities much sooner.

Similarly, transoral approaches for certain cancers eliminate the need for external incisions, preserving both appearance and function. "These advancements represent a shift towards minimally invasive yet highly effective cancer care, aligning with the broader goal of maximizing patient comfort without compromising treatment outcomes," adds Dr. Kondamudi Dheeraj. Beyond clinical practice, Dr. Dheeraj has contributed to research, including studies on prevascular facial nodes in oral cavity cancers. Such work underscores the importance of evidence-based medicine in refining treatment protocols and advancing the field.

In conclusion, Dr. Kondamudi Dheeraj's journey into head, neck, and skull base oncology reflects a blend of rigorous training, evolving expertise, and patient-centered care. Driven by early clinical exposure and a passion for precision, his work continues to advance minimally invasive cancer treatment while prioritizing function, dignity, and improved quality of life for every patient. **SI**