

Head and Neck Cancers in North-East Iran: A 25 year Survey

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Abstract

Introduction

Cancers are among the worst noncommunicable diseases around the world. Head and neck cancers are ranked as the fifth most common cancers worldwide. As there are different distributions of risk factors around the world, the incidence of these cancers varies from one place to another.

Materials and Methods:

We conducted a descriptive analytic cross-sectional study, based on census-based records from the private oncology clinic in Mashhad, Iran. Data from 1,075 patients with head and neck cancers were analyzed from 1986 to 2010. We categorized the duration of study into five periods: 1986–1990, 1991–1995, 1996–2000, 2001–2005, and 2006–2010. Head and neck cancers refers to cancers originating from seven sites in the head and neck including the nasal cavity, oral cavity, pharynx, larynx, salivary glands, paranasal sinuses, and thyroid.

Results:

Data of 1,075 patients were analyzed. 66.2% were male. Mean \pm standard deviation (SD) age at the time of diagnosis was 55.37 ± 15.55 years. The most frequent type of head and neck cancer was larynx cancer (36%), followed by pharynx (28.5%), oral (17.5%), thyroid (6.8%), sinus (6.4%), salivary gland (4.10%), and nasal cancer (0.70%). although larynx cancer was the most frequent cancer over the whole study duration, there was a significant ($P=0.04$) difference in the relative frequency of these cancers across the five time periods. There was a significant difference in mean age between cancer categories ($P<0.001$). The only cancer with a different mean age at different time periods was pharynx cancer ($P=0.02$). There was a significant difference between sex and cancer categories ($P<0.001$).

Conclusion:

Laryngeal cancer was the most common head and neck cancer over the whole duration of this study. The differences in the patterns of other head and neck cancers could be due to geographical differences and also different risk factors and lifestyles all over the world. Further investigations in these fields are suggested in future studies.

Key words:

Demography, Epidemiology, Head and neck neoplasms, Iran.

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