

Personalized Approach for Tongue Cancer

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“Personalized therapy”, which has been highlighted in medicine these days, is considered to have almost same meaning with “personalized gene therapy”. Personalized gene therapy has advanced recently with detection of various cancer-related genes, development of genetic screening for cancer patients, and improvement of targeted molecular therapy. Because a large proportion of head and neck cancers express EGFR, molecular therapy targeted for EGFR has been the mainstream of research and practice in the field of personalized therapy for head and neck cancer.

However, “personalized therapy” is not merely “gene therapy”, but more comprehensive approach for individual patient. With introduction of concurrent chemoradiation (primary or adjuvant), the indication the extent of surgery have changed,

that is, have been reduced. Also, the importance of reconstruction is emphasized for better functional outcome and better quality of life. The technical improvement of free flap reconstruction has a great role on this approach. For example, the reconstruction of the surgical defect with free flap can help postoperative swallowing and articulation. In addition, with spread of intraoral laser surgery and development of robot surgery, invasive procedures, such as mandibulotomy, has been reduced more and more. Incorporation of these new approaches advances the concept of “personalized therapy”, with treatment strategies tailored to the circumstances and future of each patient. In this lecture, I'd like to discuss about various approaches for tongue cancer.