

# Northern Illinois ENT

## OFFERS

# MONTHLY CANCER CLINIC

A cancer diagnosis is hard enough. Patients shouldn't also have to worry about where to find education and treatment. That's why Dr. Joseph Scianna at Northern Illinois ENT offers a monthly cancer clinic for individuals with head and neck cancer, a broad category of cancers that occur in the head or neck region, including the nasal cavity, sinuses, lips, mouth, salivary glands, throat, tonsils, or larynx.

"After a diagnosis of any cancer, the patient always has a variety of questions and concerns," Scianna said. "Understanding how different specialties address cancer and what risks, benefits, and alternatives exist for treatment of a particular cancer is of paramount importance."

That's why, on the first Tuesday of every month, Northern Illinois ENT provides head and neck cancer patients with essential education on the best treatment options for their unique case. Dr. Scianna started the clinic in 2009 in conjunction with the Illinois Regional Cancer Center and Drs. Mohammed Memon and Amit Bhate. "When Dr. Scianna joined Dr. Lotan's practice, given his experience at Loyola University Medical Center, I felt it was



► Dr. Joseph Scianna, Dr. Amit Bhate, and Dr. Mohammed Memon

a great opportunity for DeKalb and the surrounding area to benefit from a multidisciplinary clinic," said Memon.

"Multidisciplinary" means that head and neck cancer patients who participate in the clinic benefit from focused care that is coordinated among the three arms of cancer treatment—surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy. These areas are represented by Scianna (surgery), Bhate (radiation oncology), and Memon (chemotherapy).

Additionally, the doctors work closely with the nurse coordinator at the Illinois Regional Cancer Center, a physical therapist, social worker, speech therapist, and nutritional therapist to streamline every patient's treatment experience.

Charles "Chuck" Long of DeKalb has a clean bill of health today thanks to the coordinated care he received at the Cancer Clinic. After being diagnosed last October with a malignant tumor on his left tonsil, Chuck



► Charles "Chuck" Long

said the clinic got him started with the right treatment, and provided the confidence he needed to tackle Stage IV cancer.

"I met with all three of the doctors and they laid out my options and how each one would impact my quality of life," Long said. "Dr. Scianna said surgery would likely cause a great deal of hardship—eating out of a tube, things like that—so I was encouraged to pursue chemotherapy and radiation with Dr. Memon and Dr. Bhate at the Illinois Regional Cancer Center."

"After attending the clinic, I felt reassured—so much so that I didn't think a second opinion was necessary," Long continued. "I started my treatment at the Illinois Regional Cancer Center and had a wonderful experience. The doctors and in particular the nurses there took such great care of me. I started calling them 'Charlie's angels,' and they truly were."

"The benefit to the patient is substantial," said Scianna. "First and foremost is education. Specifically with head and neck cancer, patients have to understand how

treatment can impact them mentally and socially, as well as physiologically in terms of diet, swallowing, and speech function."

The physicians ask every patient with a diagnosis of a head or neck cancer who is living or being treated locally to participate in the clinic, as well as each person's support system.

"Patients and their families are able to ask questions of each of the physicians in one clinic visit," said Memon. "This provides for a better understanding of their disease process, management, and prognosis. The Head and Neck Clinic has helped to decrease some of the anxiety associated with these life threatening diseases, for both the patient and his or her family."

When Mike Mols was diagnosed with a Stage IV cancerous tumor in his left lower nasal pharynx, he attended the Cancer Clinic with his wife Rose, his son, and his daughter-in-law.

"It was so helpful for them to be there to get all the information about my diagnosis," said Mols. "Thanks to the Cancer Clinic, we all felt more prepared for what was coming. As I was going through treatment and feeling ill and overwhelmed, my family was able to remind me about what was 'normal' and keep me focused on the finish line."



In the time between clinics, patients receive further testing, including imaging and labs, as ordered by the physicians. They also attend follow-up appointments with the ancillary team to ensure maximum nutritional, physical, mental, and social support.

Ultimately, the goals of the clinic are twofold—to limit the impact of treatment on the patient's quality of life, and to cure each individual's cancer. "The role of our clinic is to help put patients at ease about the typical progression of treatment," said Scianna. "The comprehensive support provided by the team approach of the multidisciplinary clinic cannot be overstated."

A referral from Scianna, Memon, or Bhate as well as an initial evaluation is required to participate in the Cancer Clinic. For more information, contact Northern Illinois ENT at (815) 758-8106 or the Illinois Regional Cancer Center at (815) 756-5255. ■



► Head and Neck Cancer Clinic staff

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