

news from

# Swedish Head and Neck Surgery

JANUARY 2014



**T**he Swedish Head & Neck Surgery Clinic at the Swedish Cancer Institute concluded another fulfilling year in 2013, both from a clinical standpoint and community outreach perspective. After paving the way for a state-of-the-art head and neck cancer treatment center in late 2009, we have maintained our commitment to excellent cancer care with compassion.

In 2013, we continued to expand our experience in microvascular free tissue transfer, Trans Oral Robotic Surgery (TORS), Transoral Laser Microsurgery (TLM), and thyroid/parathyroid surgery. During the past four years, we have built a very large database of such cases. In particular, our microvascular volume has remained very robust, with an ever-increasing repertoire of flaps used. We have also remained at the forefront of other reconstructive techniques, including the use of Supra Clavicular Artery Island Flap (SCAIF). As for robotic surgical experience, we have become facile, but have also become more critical in patient selection as we learn more from it. In essence, Swedish Head & Neck Surgery is a unique clinic, which provides multidisciplinary, tertiary cancer care in a non-academic large, regional referral center.

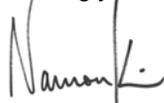
Despite our increasing volume, one of our continued sources of pride is that we provide very personal and individualized care to our patients. We understand that our cancer patients are embarking on very difficult and frightful journeys. Utilizing all the resources harnessed at the Swedish Cancer Institute, we deliver compassionate care from the day they step into our doors. Our patients meet an entire team, and we are available to them literally 24/7, in order to alleviate the stress and anxiety associated with their cancer care. That is truly what sets us apart from other centers: our patients become part of our extended family, and not just a number.

During the past year, we have also solidified care pathways established through the strategic alliance between Swedish and the Providence Health system. This has greatly improved access for patients, many of whom are seeking care close to home. 2013 was also gratifying because of the stronger relationships built with our numerous colleagues in the Pacific Northwest and beyond. We strive to maintain excellent communication with our referring physicians to keep them abreast of the progress of their patients, but also to provide seamless continued care for patients who choose to be seen by their own doctors.

2013 has also seen the realization of the expansion of our service, with the addition of Dr. Joe Sniezek. Dr. Sniezek, a national figure in head and neck and endocrine surgery will bring his expertise to Swedish in July 2014. With his arrival, we will be adding a dedicated Thyroid Tumor Board within the multidisciplinary tumor boards at the Swedish Cancer Institute, improving care of thyroid cancer patients.

We will remain dedicated to the cause of head and neck cancer patients, and will continue to be humbled by the experience and strength of each and every patient. We will continue to be grateful for the commitment and confidence of our colleagues who have entrusted their patients to us.

Wishing you a Happy 2014!



Namou Kim, M.D.

Medical Director, Head & Neck and Reconstructive Surgery  
Swedish Medical Center



# Updates

## Multidisciplinary Head & Neck Tumor Board

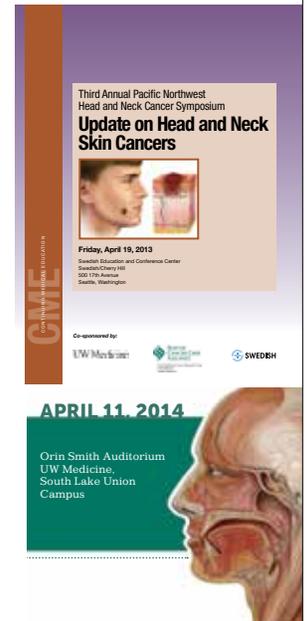
Our tumor board has been very active, with 188 proprietary cases presented during calendar year 2013. The unique feature of this tumor board is that it is an educational CME event, and thus open to any provider in the community wishing to present a case. To arrange a tumor board discussion, please feel free to contact the Swedish Head & Neck Surgery Clinic at 206-292-6464.

## Collaborative Multidisciplinary Surgical Cases

With the existing assets at Swedish Medical Center, such as neurosurgery, vascular surgery, thoracic surgery and facial plastic surgery, we are able to provide combined surgical care for patients with very complex problems. In 2013, we successfully collaborated on craniofacial resections, complex cervical vascular diseases, and treated major upper airway and digestive tract diseases. In addition, some of our referring providers choose to stay involved: with the unique open-staff model at Swedish, those credentialed providers have been co-surgeons in complex surgical cancer and/or reconstructive cases. Finally, as part of continuous education and improvement, we seek expert guidance and proctoring from outside surgeons. For example, Dr. Marc Hohman from Madigan Army Medical Center provided surgical proctoring in facial reanimation surgery in the autumn of 2013.

## 3rd Annual Pacific Northwest Head & Neck Cancer Symposium

This event was hosted at the Cherry Hill campus of Swedish Medical Center on April 19, 2013. This symposium was co-hosted by the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance and the University of Washington, Department of Otolaryngology. More than 100 audience members participated in this lively interactive CME meeting, with the focus on head and neck skin cancers. Our guest speakers included Dr. Randal Weber from the MD Anderson Cancer Center and Dr. Anne Chang from Stanford University. The 4th Annual Symposium will be hosted on April 11, 2014 at the South Lake Union Campus of the University of Washington. Guest speakers will include Dr. Gregory Weinstein (University of Pennsylvania) and Dr. Mitchell Machtay (Case Western Reserve University). For more information, please visit [www.swedish.org/cme](http://www.swedish.org/cme). This activity has been approved for AMA PRA (Category I Credit).



**W**e are pleased to announce the addition of Dr. Joe Sniezek starting in July 2014. Dr. Sniezek joins us from the Queen's Medical Center and Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu, HI, where he has served as the Chair of the Department of Otolaryngology, Residency Program Director, and the Consultant to the Surgeon General for Otolaryngology/Head & Neck Surgery.

His medical education was completed at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine. After otolaryngology residency training in San Antonio, he completed a head and neck oncologic and microvascular surgery fellowship at Vanderbilt under Drs. Jim Netterville and Brian Burkey. Dr. Sniezek recently received an honor award from the American Academy of Otolaryngology/Head & Neck Surgery and a Vice-Presidential Citation from the Triological Society for his outstanding clinical and academic contributions to the field of Otolaryngology/Head & Neck Surgery.



Namou Kim, M.D., David Moore, M.D., and Joe Sniezek, M.D.

Dr. Sniezek is a national expert in the field of head and neck oncology and thyroid and parathyroid diseases. He has a particular interest in minimally invasive and robotically-assisted thyroid and parathyroid surgery as well as office-based, clinician-performed head and neck ultrasound. He is an American College of Surgeons head and neck ultrasound instructor and has spoken and published extensively on the topic. In addition, Dr. Sniezek will be adding sialendoscopy and office-based transnasal esophagoscopy procedures to the Head & Neck Surgery Clinic.

Dr. Sniezek will bring his expertise to Swedish Medical Center and provide a dedicated thyroid and parathyroid clinic, including the area's first multidisciplinary thyroid tumor board at the Swedish Cancer Institute.

# Updates *(continued)*

## Microvascular Free Flaps

We have continued to maintain a robust volume of free flaps since we began in late 2009. Our success rate of free flaps has been on par with national data, exceeding 95%. We provide a wide range of flap selections, ranging from fibula flaps, perforator flaps, visceral flaps and gracilis flaps for facial reanimation.

## Surgical Education

As members of the teaching staff for the head and neck rotations for otolaryngology residents from Madigan Army Medical Center and general surgery residents from Swedish Medical Center, we remain dedicated to the education of the next generation of otolaryngologists and general surgeons.



## Case Highlight

Since 2010, we have been working side-by-side with many providers from numerous different specialties. Having a multidisciplinary cadre of physicians is the only way to harness the necessary skills and experience to care for difficult medical problems. Our setting has been unique in the sense that many of our referring physicians have actively participated in the care of their patients, pre-operatively, intra-operatively, and post-operatively. This has resulted in very satisfied patients: they know that their doctors are caring for them as a team, and they do not feel that they are merely carted to the next level of care.

Dr. Nadeem Esmail (DDS, M.D.) has been one of those physicians that has always been at the forefront of this team effort at Swedish. Dr. Esmail specializes in oral and maxillofacial surgery, and offers unique skills that enhance our capacity and synergize the specialties of oral surgery and head and neck surgery.



In early 2013, JV, a 42 year-old healthy man presented to Dr. Esmail with a slowly enlarging mandible lesion. An initial panorex showed a fairly prominent lucency of the right mandible (*Figure 1*).

The panorex and initial curettage for biopsy showed evidence of an ameloblastoma. An ameloblastoma is a benign odontogenic neoplasm that typically requires complete excision with a segmental mandibulectomy to prevent recurrence.

With the careful and attentive guidance of Dr. Esmail, the patient was counseled about his condition and decided to proceed with surgery after meeting with us. Dr. Esmail and his team, in collaboration with the head and neck surgical team, began pre-operative planning, as well as medical modeling and pre-adapted reconstruction plates customization for the patient's unique anatomy and condition. A plastic

mandible was created (*Figure 2*), to the exact specifications of the patient's actual jaw, with the expected amount of bone to be resected. Then a plate was custom-created to fit the contour of the new mandible.



The surgery was conducted as a two-team approach. As Dr. Esmail proceeded with the resection of the ameloblastoma, we proceeded with the reconstruction at the same time. The patient had a fibula free flap to reconstruct the mandible (*Figure 3 and 4*): this was his most optimal reconstructive option, given his young age, and also to give him future option of full dental restoration with osteointegrated dental implants.



JV recovered from the surgery very well. His post-operative panorex showed excellent healing of the bone into the native mandible (*Figure 5*). He is now getting prepared for dental restoration. He was very appreciative that both of his providers contributed to his care. Furthermore, the participation of Dr. Esmail added to the convenience factor: the patient's follow up visitations could be done closer to his home with Dr. Esmail.



Again, this case demonstrates the many collaborative efforts between Swedish Head & Neck Surgery and our network of referring doctors. This is made possible by maintaining an excellent and open channel of communication between providers. We pride ourselves in keeping all of our referring physicians involved in the care of their patients.

**Figure 1:** Pre-operative panorex • **Figure 2:** Pre-operating planning model of patient's mandible • **Figure 3 Upper:** Mandible specimen • **Figure 3 Lower:** Fibula free flap • **Figure 4:** Fibular free flap fixated with custom-made reconstructive plate **Figure 5:** Post-operative panorex

# Providers



**Namou Kim, M.D., F.A.C.S.**

*Medical degree: Case Western Reserve University*

*Board certified: American Board of Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery*

*Residency: Otolaryngology - Head & Neck Surgery, Case Western Reserve University*

*Internship: General Surgery, University Hospitals of Cleveland and Case Western Reserve University*

*Fellowship: Head and Neck Oncologic and Microvascular Surgery, Mayo Clinic*



**David W. Moore, M.D., F.A.C.S.**

*Medical degree: Indiana University Medical Center*

*Additional education: M.B.A., Syracuse University*

*Board certified: American Board of Otorhinolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery*

*Residency: Pre-specialty General Surgery, Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery, Madigan Army Medical Center*

*Internship: Madigan Army Medical Center*

*Fellowship: Head and Neck Surgery, Swedish Medical Center*



**M. Christine Tiu, PA-C, M.P.A.S.**

*Medical degree: Masters of Physician Assistant Studies - Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences in Boston*

*Certifications: National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants*

# Services

- Head and neck surgery
- Microvascular (free flap) reconstructive surgery
- Thyroid surgery and diagnostic ultrasonography
- Minimally invasive parathyroid surgery and radio-guided surgery
- Transoral Robotic Surgery (TORS)
- Transoral Laser Microsurgery (TLM)
- Transaxillary robotic thyroid surgery
- Anterior skull base surgery
- Cutaneous cancers of the head and neck
- Salivary gland tumors
- Congenital head and neck reconstructive surgery
- Complex trauma reconstruction to head and neck