

[Get Access](#)[Share](#)[Export](#)

Journal of the National Medical Association

Volume 102, Issue 9, September 2010, Pages 811-816

Original Communication

Head and Neck Cancer Screening in Homeless Communities: HEAL (Health Education, Assessment, and Leadership]

Charles E. Moore MD¹ ... Frederick Durden MD¹

[Show more](#)

[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0027-9684\(15\)30678-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0027-9684(15)30678-7)

[Get rights and content](#)

Homeless persons are at high risk for medical illness, particularly for head and neck cancers, but they face several barriers to receiving adequate health care. We conducted cancer screening and education about head and neck cancer risk factors in one such population (n = 325). Although 41.4% of the participants reported at least 1 otolaryngologic sign or symptom, and 8.6% reported having 2 or more symptoms, most of them (72.3%) had received no medical care. The symptom reported most often was a change in voice (17.2%). In all, 11% of the participants were referred for head or neck cancer evaluation, and 9% of those undergoing biopsy had a malignancy that was later treated. Nearly 75% of participants had at least a ninth-grade education. However, although 71.2% knew that the use of tobacco can lead to lung cancer, 78.9% did not recognize that it can also lead to head or neck cancer. In this population, cigarette smoking was associated with more than doubled odds of follow-up medical care (odds ratio, 2.31). Head and neck cancers cause substantial morbidity and mortality. Community outreach programs can be an excellent starting point to improving early detection and health education for underserved communities.

[Previous](#)[Next](#)

Keywords

cancer; screening; head; neck; risk factors

[Recommended articles](#)[Citing articles \(7\)](#)

Funding/Support: This research was funded in part by grants NCMHD 5P60-MD000525 and 1 R13 MD002704-01 from the National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland.

ELSEVIER [About ScienceDirect](#) [Remote access](#) [Shopping cart](#) [Contact and support](#) [Terms and conditions](#) [Privacy policy](#)

We use cookies to help provide and enhance our service and tailor content and ads. By continuing you agree to the [use of cookies](#).

Copyright © 2018 Elsevier B.V. or its licensors or contributors. ScienceDirect® is a registered trademark of Elsevier B.V.

 **RELX** Group™