

# Nasopharyngeal Cancer



This NCCN QUICK GUIDE™ sheet summarizes key points from the complete [NCCN Guidelines for Patients®: Nasopharyngeal Cancer](#). These guidelines explain which tests and treatments are recommended by experts in cancer. To view and download the guidelines, visit [NCCN.org/patients](http://NCCN.org/patients) or, to order printed copies, visit Amazon.com.

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## What is nasopharyngeal cancer?



It is a type of throat cancer. It forms from cells that line the part of the throat that is behind the nose.

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## What are the tests for nasopharyngeal cancer?

■ A report of your health history and an exam of your body	<a href="#">13</a>
■ Questions about distress	<a href="#">14</a>
■ An exam of your throat with a device called an endoscope	<a href="#">15</a>
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■ Test of the Epstein-Barr virus if needed	<a href="#">18</a>
■ Tests by other health specialists if needed	<a href="#">18</a>

## What are cancer stages?

■ Stages of nasopharyngeal cancer are ratings of the extent of cancer in the body. Nasopharyngeal cancer has six stages. Stage 0 isn't cancer but abnormal throat cells that may become cancer. Stages 1, 2, 3, 4A, and 4B are cancer.

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## What are the options for initial treatment?

<b>Stage 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Radiation therapy</li> </ul>	
<b>Stages 2, 3, 4A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Clinical trial (preferred)</li> <li>■ Chemoradiation with chemotherapy</li> <li>■ Chemoradiation</li> </ul>	
<b>Stage 4B</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Clinical trial (preferred)</li> <li>■ Platinum-based systemic therapy followed by:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Radiation therapy or</li> <li>▶ Chemoradiation or</li> <li>▶ No further treatment</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Chemoradiation</li> <li>■ Radiation therapy or surgery</li> </ul>	<b>23</b>

## Who gets a neck dissection after initial treatment?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ This surgery is done when cancer is likely in lymph nodes within your neck.</li> </ul>	<b>26</b>
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## What happens after treatment?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ You will see your cancer doctor on a regular basis. You may also meet with other health specialists to improve your quality of life and to prevent other diseases.</li> </ul>	<b>28</b>
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## What are treatment options if the cancer returns or persists?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Your options are partly based on the extent of the cancer and your prior treatment.</li> <li>■ Ask your doctor if there is a clinical trial that is right for you.</li> <li>■ If the cancer has not spread far, local treatment with surgery, radiation therapy, or chemoradiation may be options.</li> <li>■ Other options include cancer drugs and supportive care to improve quality of life.</li> </ul>	<b>30</b>
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