

ANALYSIS OF SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC AND CLINICAL DATA OF PATIENTS WITH HEAD AND NECK CANCER TREATED IN ONCOLOGICAL REFERENCE HOSPITALS IN BELÉM-PA

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Introduction: Head and neck cancer (HNC) comprises a heterogeneous group of malignant neoplasms that can affect the oral cavity, pharynx, larynx, nose, paranasal sinuses, orbit, neck and thyroid. It represents a major public health challenge due to its high incidence and mortality, with approximately 80% of cases diagnosed in advanced stages, which significantly reduces the chances of cure. It is estimated that approximately 900,000 new cases occur each year worldwide, especially in low- and middle-income countries. In Brazil, HNC is the fifth most common type of cancer, being more common in men. Among the main risk factors are smoking and alcoholism, associated with sociodemographic aspects such as sex, education and race/color.

Objective: To investigate the associations between sociodemographic profile, risk behaviors and clinical characteristics in HNC patients treated at oncology centers in the North of Brazil. **Methods:** Observational study with adult patients diagnosed with HNC and treated at João de Barros Barreto University Hospital and Ophir Loyola Hospital, in Belém (PA), between July 2023 and August 2024. Data were extracted from electronic medical records, tabulated and analyzed using Jamovi software (v.2.2.1). The chi-square test was applied to verify associations between sociodemographic, clinical and outcome variables, with a significance level of $p \leq 5\%$. The study was approved by the Ethics Committee (CAAE: 68356923.4.0000.5634). **Results:** A significant association was identified between sex and alcohol consumption ($p = 0.001$), with a higher prevalence of alcoholism among men. Similarly, a relationship was observed between sex and smoking ($p = 0.001$), indicating that men also tend to have higher tobacco consumption in the studied group. A strong association was also observed between smoking and alcoholism ($p < 0.001$), revealing that, in the analyzed data, men who presented both habits had an increased risk of HNC. The most frequent tumor types were thyroid gland, larynx and other soft parts of the tongue. Among all registered HNC

types, a significant difference was found according to education level ($p < 0.001$), suggesting that educational background may influence access to information and early diagnosis. Associations were also observed between tumor types and alcoholism ($p = 0.020$), as well as race/color ($p < 0.001$), evidencing social inequalities in case distribution. Finally, certain tumor types showed a greater association with death ($p = 0.014$), which may guide prevention strategies and clinical interventions. **Conclusion:** HNC is a serious condition, but with potential for cure when identified early. This study demonstrated that sociodemographic and behavioral factors directly influence disease profile and severity. Integrating this information is essential for developing more effective public policies, awareness campaigns and clinical strategies focused on prevention, early diagnosis and equity in cancer care.

Keywords: Head and neck neoplasms; Upper aerodigestive tract neoplasms; Clinical epidemiology