

# PILOT STUDY ON 'LOW DOSE IMMUNOTHERAPY' CLAIMS EFFECTIVE RESULTS IN TREATMENT OF HEAD AND NECK CANCER PATIENTS

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A multicentric randomised pilot study on “low dose immunotherapy” taken up by doctors at a private cancer hospital in Bengaluru has claimed effective results on head and neck cancer patients.

“This open-labelled prospective study provides an affordable cancer treatment option in the management of head and neck cancers,” claimed doctors at the HCG Cancer hospital where the study was done.

Addressing presspersons here on Wednesday, Satheesh C.T., Consultant - Medical and Hemato Oncology - and director of Clinical Trials at the hospital said the multicentric study assesses the effectiveness of neoadjuvant therapy combining low-dose immunotherapy Nivolumab and the TPF regimen (docetaxel, cisplatin, and 5-fluorouracil) compared to neoadjuvant chemotherapy (NACT) with the TPF regimen alone.

“It has a potential role in improving the quality of life and longevity of patients with locally advanced carcinoma of the buccal mucosa,” the doctor said.

As part of the pilot study, 12 cases were studied in the 54 - 76 age group. “In the pilot study, standard NACT is combined with low-dose Nivolumab immunotherapy, administering 40 mg every two weeks, as opposed to the full dose of 3 mg per kg of body weight,” Dr. Satheesh explained.

Head and neck cancers pose a substantial global health issue, comprising 4.5% of total worldwide cancer cases with a mortality rate of 4.6%. The burden is exceptionally high in Asia, notably in India, where they make up nearly 35% of all cancer cases among individuals aged 40-60 years. Over two lakh cases of head and neck cancers are detected every year in India.

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