

Key Points

Question: How did the incidence of localized and advanced head and neck cancer (HNC) change between 2019 and 2020, that is, before and during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Findings: In this cross-sectional descriptive analysis of the latest available cancer registry data, incidence of localized-stage head and neck cancer declined by 7.9% from 2019 to 2020, with no observed change in incidence of advanced diagnoses. Results varied by demographic factors and cancer site.

Meaning: Given that we only observed decrease in the incidence of localized HNC during the first year of the pandemic, we might expect to observe higher advanced diagnoses in the coming years.

Question: How did the incidence rate of localized and advanced head and neck cancer (HNC) (HNC) change between 2019 and 2020, ~~that is, before and during the~~ first year of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Findings: In this cross-sectional study of patients diagnosed with HNC from 2017 to 2020 in the US ~~In this cross-sectional descriptive analysis of the latest available cancer registry data,~~ incidence rates of ~~localized~~ early-stage ~~stage head and neck cancer~~ HNC declined by 7.9% from 2019 to 2020, with ~~out~~ no observed change ~~in incidence of~~ advanced HNC diagnoses. ~~Results varied by demographic factors and cancer site.~~

Meaning: ~~Given that we only observed~~ Because the ~~decrease in the~~ incidence of only localized and regional HNC ~~HNC decreased~~ during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, ~~we might expect to observe higher~~ a greater number of advanced HNC diagnoses may be observed ~~in the coming years~~ later years.

Commented [JB4]: Best to focus on single primary outcomes here. (Also we have to keep it to 1 short sentence.)

Commented [JCB5]: In the supplemental data file, the percentage appears to be 7.8%. Is this different due to rounding?

Key Points

Question How did the incidence rate of localized and advanced head and neck cancer (HNC) change between 2019 and 2020, the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Findings In this cross-sectional study of patients diagnosed with HNC from 2017 to 2020 in the US, incidence rates of early-stage HNC declined by 7.9% from 2019 to 2020, without change in advanced HNC diagnoses.

Meaning Because the incidence of only localized and regional HNC decreased during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, a greater number of advanced HNC diagnoses may be observed in later years.