



RON LANG, JR.

THE BEST OPTIONS *for All Patients*

KARMANOS APPLIES A TEAM APPROACH TO TREAT HEAD AND NECK CANCER

What started as a persistent sore throat turned into a life-altering experience for Ron Lang, Jr., an aerospace machinist from Madison Heights. In 2001, doctors diagnosed him with stage IV throat cancer and gave him two months to live. Lang was only 31.

“My throat was sore for a couple of years,” says Lang, who has seven children. “At that time I didn’t see a doctor unless I felt really ill. I was a workaholic and wanted to provide for my children.”

Lang took action after noticing a grape-sized lump on the left side of his Adam’s apple. His primary care doctor immediately sent him to the Karmanos Cancer Center for treatment.

“I was devastated when I learned I had cancer,” says Lang, who began smoking at age nine. “I wasn’t afraid of death – I was more concerned about my wife and kids.”

Because the disease was at an advanced stage, Lang’s case was complex. He faced the potential loss of his tongue and jaw. After consulting with Karmanos’ multidisciplinary team of head and neck cancer specialists, Lang had surgery and began an aggressive radiation and chemotherapy treatment regimen. Today he is cancer-free and did not suffer any losses that would have placed him on

permanent disability. Looking back on his long and sometimes difficult journey, Lang says Karmanos was instrumental in saving his life.

INNOVATIVE TREATMENTS

Karmanos has 13 multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) of specialists from each diagnostic, treatment and supportive care discipline. Their goal is to collectively offer the best treatment methods based on the latest research and state-of-the-art therapies. This approach to patient care is part of what makes Karmanos one of 40 National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer centers in the United States.

The Multidisciplinary Head and Neck Oncology Team has nationally-recognized experts in cancers that affect all head and neck areas, including those involving the lip, tongue, throat and voice box. Each week, the team of head and neck surgeons, a radiation oncologist, medical oncologists, a neuroradiologist, an oral oncologist, pathologists, a maxillofacial prosthetics specialist, a speech and swallow therapist, clinical and research nurses, and others meet face-to-face in a high-tech conference room to review the details of complex cases like Lang’s. The team takes into consideration not only the cancer’s

The Karmanos Cancer Center Multidisciplinary Head and Neck Oncology Team

The head and neck malignancy experts at Karmanos are among the finest in the nation. Below are the Head and Neck Multidisciplinary Team specialists.

HO-SHENG LIN, M.D.

(Team Leader)

Head and Neck Surgery

KHALDOUN ALMHANNA, M.D., MPH

Medical Oncology

Michael Carron, M.D.

Facial Plastics and Reconstructive Surgery

JAMES DWORKIN, PH.D.

Speech-Swallow Therapy

ADAM FOLBE, M.D.

Head and Neck Surgery

Minimally Invasive

JOHN JACOBS, M.D.

Head and Neck Surgery

ZYAD KAFRI, M.D.

Medical Oncology

HAROLD KIM, M.D.

Radiation Oncology

KARL KISH, M.D.

Neuroradiology

FULVIO LONARDO, M.D.

Pathology

MARK MARUNICK, M.D., D.D.S.

Maxillofacial Prosthetics

ROBERT MATHOG, M.D.

Head and Neck Surgery

LYNNE MOSELEY, D.D.S.

Oral Oncology/Dental

NATASHA ROBINETTE, M.D.

Neuroradiology

WAEEL A. SAKR, M.D.

Pathology

MARK SIMPSON, PH.D.

Speech-Swallow Therapy

AMMAR SUKARI, M.D.

Medical Oncology

GEORGE YOO, M.D.

Head and Neck Surgery

IMAD ZAK, M.D.

Neuroradiology

“My treatment at Karmanos was outstanding. They don’t just invest in their patients, but also their patients’ families.”

– RON LANG

characteristics but the patient’s overall health before determining the best treatment option for that person. After the conference, the team meets with the patient and their family and offers treatment recommendations.

“Head and neck cancer is a devastating disease since it affects the part of the body which is highly visible and important for daily social interactions. Both the disease itself, as well as the treatment for the disease, significantly impact the patient’s quality of life in terms of cosmetics and the ability to eat and talk,” says Ho-Sheng Lin, M.D., FACS, leader of the Head and Neck Oncology MDT and associate professor of Otolaryngology at Wayne State University School of Medicine. “The Head and Neck MDT was created more than 30 years ago and is one of the country’s longest-standing multidisciplinary clinics. Patients who see us benefit from our collective experience. We’re dedicated to treating their specific disease and meeting their physical and emotional needs.”

The MDT approach gives patients and their families the opportunity to ask questions about treatment recommendations from all members of the treatment team including the head and neck surgeon, radiation oncologist, and medical oncologist during one meeting. Instead of making multiple appointments with different specialists – a process that can take weeks – patients can get all the answers at once and begin treatment more quickly.

When appropriate, MDTs also offer patients a number of innovative treatment options. Some may include participation in clinical trial

programs, which focus on developing new and better ways to treat cancer.

“Many of our patients are involved in clinical trials,” Dr. Lin says. “We are very interested in making treatment advances through research. In fact, the head and neck MDT has been involved in many clinical trials that have led to significant advances in the treatment of head and neck cancer. We are continuously working to improve the outcome of patients with head and neck cancer in a three-pronged approach, via clinical care, research, and teaching.”

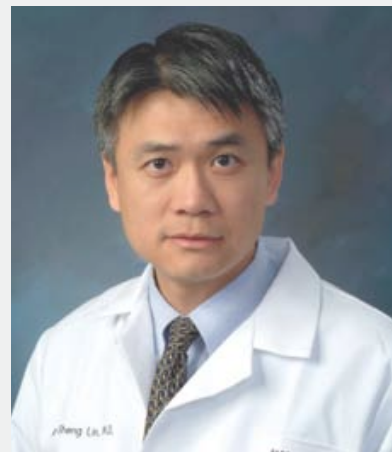
THE ROAD TO SURVIVORSHIP

After considering his treatment options, Lang chose to have his lymph nodes surgically removed before beginning radiation and chemotherapy. During this time, Lang’s weight dropped significantly and he received dentures. He lost the ability to produce saliva and experienced intense migraine headaches. After enduring many ups and downs during two and a half years of treatment, Lang received great news in August 2003: he is cancer-free.

“I felt so relieved at that moment,” Lang says. “My treatment at Karmanos was outstanding. They don’t just invest in their patients, but also their patients’ families. The love and care the doctors showed to me and my wife and kids was incredible.

“I’m a true cancer survivor, and that’s because I maintained my faith and Karmanos never gave up on me. I can’t express enough gratitude for the care I received.”

For more information about the Multidisciplinary Head and Neck Oncology Team or to make an appointment, call 1-800-Karmanos.



HO-SHENG LIN, M.D., FACS

In February, Dr. Lin became the leader of the Head and Neck Multidisciplinary Team at the Karmanos Cancer Center. He is also an associate professor at the Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery at the Wayne State University School of Medicine and chief of Otolaryngology at the John D. Dingell VA Medical Center.

Dr. Lin received his medical degree from the Yale University School of Medicine and completed an Otolaryngology residency at the New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center and New York University Medical Center. He completed fellowship training in Head and Neck Surgical Oncology at Stanford University.

Among Dr. Lin’s clinical and research interests are surgical treatment of cancer and disease involving the mouth, throat, neck, thyroid, parathyroid and salivary glands. He has special interest in the use of new and minimally invasive technology in head and neck surgery.