

NEXTGEN HEAD AND NECK CANCER CONFERENCE

Nashville, TN
November 7, 2026

VANDERBILT HEALTH

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The pace of discovery in head and neck oncology has significantly accelerated over the past decade, with new indications for multiple therapies, advances in surgical management, and novel surveillance tools. The 2026 NextGen Head & Neck Conference will convene nationally recognized investigators who are leading these advancements to present data supporting emerging treatments now impacting clinical practice.

This year's meeting will highlight perioperative immunotherapy for mucosal head and neck cancer, circulating tumor DNA (ctDNA), and de-intensification strategies for HPV-associated oropharyngeal cancer. The educational format emphasizes clinical trial highlights, debate-focused panel discussions, and a novel clinical trial concept session.

Attendees can expect a single day of high-impact presentations, multidisciplinary discussion on the direction of the field, and opportunities to foster collaboration to enhance patient care.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, participants will be able to:

- Optimize decision-making for incorporating perioperative immunotherapy into clinical practice.
- Integrate clinical applications of ctDNA in head and neck cancer, including appropriate testing intervals.
- Recognize the strengths and limitations of current de-intensification strategies for HPV-positive head and neck cancer and consider how these principles may be integrated into practice.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2026

Session I: Perioperative Immunotherapy Approaches in Mucosal Head and Neck Cancer - Introduction: Nabil Saba, MD

8:00 – 8:15	**Adaptive Surgery Following Neoadjuvant Therapy**	Adam Luginbuhl, MD
8:15 - 8:30	**Combination Neoadjuvant Strategies in HNSCC**	Lova Sun, MD
8:30 - 9:00	**Keynote 1: Neoadjuvant Immunoradiotherapy**	Bryan Bell, MD
9:00 - 9:15	**Evolving Pathologic Response Assessment: AI and the Future**	German Corredor Prada, PhD, MS
9:15 – 9:30	**Trial Highlight:** SHRINK-RAY study– Neoadjuvant Pembrolizumab + SBRT with Risk-Adapted Adjuvant Therapy	David Schwartz, MD
9:30 – 10:15	**Case Based Debate:** Neoadjuvant vs. Adjuvant Immunotherapy	Moderator: Nikki Schmitt, MD, FACS

10:15 -10:45 AM Coffee Break & Networking

Session II: Circulating Tumor DNA in Mucosal Head and Neck Cancer - Introduction: Eben Rosenthal, MD

10:45 – 11:00	**HPV+ ctDNA tools**	Cate Haring, MD
11:00 – 11:15	**HPV agnostic ctDNA tools**	Wen Da Ye, MD
11:15 - 11:30	**cfDNA Detection in Drain Fluid**	Kevin Contrera, MD
11:30 - 11:45	**ctDNA, Head & Neck Cancer and Quality of Life: Patient Perspectives**	Eleni Rettig, MD, FACS
11:45 – 12:30	**Case Based Debate:** Adopting ctDNA into Practice Now	Moderator: Anne Kane, MD

12:30 - 1:30 PM LUNCH

Session III: The Current Landscape of HPV-Associated Oropharyngeal Cancer De-Intensification - Introduction: Michael Topf, MD, MMCI

1:30 - 1:45	**New and Emerging Targeted Therapies for HPV De-Intensification**	Nadeem Riaz, MD
1:45 - 2:00	**Subtypes of HPV-Initiated Head & Neck Cancer: Opportunities for De-Escalation and Precision Therapy**	Wendell Yarbrough, MD, MMHC, FACS
2:00 - 2:30	**Keynote 2: Elective Nodal Irradiation**	Quynh-Thu Le, MD
2:30 - 2:45	**Trial Highlight:** ctHPVDNA-Adaptive Adjuvant Radiotherapy Following TORS	Kyle Mannion, MD, FACS
2:45 - 3:00	**Trial Highlight:** REACT	John Schoenfeld, MD
3:00 - 3:15	**Trial Highlight: NACHO-TORS**	Christopher Holsinger, MD, FACS
3:15 - 4:00	**Case-based Debate**: Best Approach to HPV-associated De-intensification	Moderator: Annie Moroco, MD

Adjournment & Networking Cocktail Hour 4:00-6:00 PM

CONFERENCE DIRECTORS

Michael Topf, MD, MSCI
Associate Professor of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery
Vanderbilt University Medical Center

Nabil Saba, MD
Professor, Department of Hematology and Medical Oncology,
Emory University School of Medicine

Eben Rosenthal, MD
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CONFERENCE FACULTY

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Cate Haring, MD	The Ohio State University
Christopher Holsinger, MD, FACS	Stanford University
Anne Kane, MD	University of Alabama-Birmingham
Quynh-Thu Le, MD	Stanford University
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Kyle Mannion, MD	Vanderbilt Health
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Annie Moroco, MD	University of Virginia
Barbara Murphy, MD	Vanderbilt Health
Mihir Patel, MD	University of North Carolina
Eleni Rettig, MD, FACS	Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
Nadeem Riaz, MD	Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
Scott Roof, MD	Mount Sinai Hospital
Nicole Schmitt, MD, FACS	Emory University School of Medicine

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Lova Sun, MD	Penn Medicine - Upenn
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