A LIFESAVING PARTNERSHIP

Three years ago, ENT and Allergy Associates (ENTA) formed a first-of-its-kind community medicine and academic medicine affiliation with the otolaryngology department at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Manhattan for the screening and treatment of head and neck cancers. Rather than regarding each other as competition, both medical centers of excellence have come together to vastly improve and expedite patient care.

“This affiliation offers our patient unique access to tertiary care at a time when they might need it most,” said Wayne Eisman, M.D., president of ENT and Allergy Associates, which is the largest ENT (ear, nose and throat) doctor, allergy and audiology practice in the tristate area- with 35 offices in Westchester, Putnam, Orange, Dutchess, Rockland, and Nassau counties as well as New York City and Bergen, Hudson, Middlesex, Morris, Passaic and Somerset counties in New Jersey. “We believe this community-to-academic-medicine connection is indeed the new paradigm for superior medical care, and it’s available to any and every patient of ENT and Allergy Associates.”

Under the program, patients coming into an ENT and Allergy Associates center who present with symptoms that may correspond to head and neck cancer are screened for these diseases at the local center. This includes going over a patient’s medical history, performing a physical examination specific to those symptoms, and ordering diagnostic and laboratory tests. If treatment at an academic medical center is deemed necessary, the patient is then sent on a priority basis to the Multidisciplinary Head and Neck Cancer Center at Mount Sinai Medical Center. There, the patient is under the care of world-class surgeons who specialize in cancer of the head and neck.

“This is a positive for our patients and physicians,” said Dr. Eisman. “There are types of problems that patients present with at our offices that ought to be cared for at an academic setting. Some of these might include complicated cancers of the base of the tongue, the esophagus of the voice box. We have invested in the advanced technology that facilitates rapid diagnosis of head and neck diseases. What makes this new relationship so valuable to our patients is that, if indicates, we can expedite on a same-day basis the transfer of care to Mount Sinai Hospital physicians who specialize in caring for these serious medical problem and with whom we work closely.”

The patient can then return to ENT and Allergy Associates after receiving treatment at Mount Sinai. To date, ENTA has referred nearly 2,000 patients to Mount Sinai for specialized care. More than 55,000 Americans will develop cancer of the head and neck, according to ENT and Allergy Associates. This type of cancer can be curable if caught early, which is why expedited, specialized care is crucial.