

# Many head and neck cancer survivors don't return to work

April 9 2015

---



(HealthDay)—Many head and neck cancer survivors do not return to work, according to a study published in the April issue of *Head & Neck*.

Robert Koch, M.D., from Jena University Hospital in Germany, and colleagues examined employment and psychological factors in head and neck survivors with survivorship of at least two years. A survey was administered to 55 [head](#) and [neck cancer](#) survivors, aged 60 years or younger, including subscales from the Functional Assessment of Cancer Therapy (FACT) instrument, the Miller Behavioral Style Scale, the General Perceived Self-Efficacy Scale, the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9), and the Hornheider-Fragebogen short version.

The researchers observed a decrease in the rate of employed patients,

from three-quarters of patients before diagnosis to one-third at an average of 66.8 months after diagnosis. There was a correlation between current unemployment with harder physical work before diagnosis, surgical treatment, and current risky alcohol consumption. Decreased FACT functional and social well-being and higher PHQ depression scores were reported among unemployed survivors.

"The likelihood not to return to work is high after [head and neck cancer](#) treatment," the authors write. "Beyond standard rehabilitation programs, the development of specific psychosocial interventions for this patient group may be warranted to support the patients' to return to work."

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
[Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

Copyright © 2015 [HealthDay](#). All rights reserved.

Citation: Many head and neck cancer survivors don't return to work (2015, April 9) retrieved 30 January 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-04-neck-cancer-survivors-dont.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--