

# Madigan Army Medical Center Referral Guidelines

## Salivary Gland Mass

### Diagnosis/Definition

- Any mass of the parotid, submandibular, or intraoral minor salivary glands.
- For Adults:
  - 20% of all parotid masses are malignant
  - 50 % of all submandibular masses are malignant
  - 75% of minor salivary gland masses are malignant
- For pediatric patients the likelihood that firm salivary gland masses are malignant is higher than the above percentages while softer masses typically represent vascular tumors such as hemangiomas or lymphangiomas.

### Initial Diagnosis and Management

- Complete head & neck exam.
- Evaluate facial nerve function.
- OPEN BIOPSY OF SALIVARY MASS IS CONTRAINDICATED IN ALL CASES.

### Ongoing Management and Objectives

Management objectives should focus on evaluation and preparation of the patient for surgery if necessary.

### Indications for Specialty Care Referral

- Referral to Otolaryngology/Head & Neck Surgery (ENT) is indicated for all suspected cases of salivary gland neck masses.
- Referral should be considered before radiographic imaging.

### Criteria for Return to Primary Care

Successful management of salivary gland mass.

Last Review for this Guideline: **May 2009**

Referral Guidelines require review every three years.

Maintained by the Madigan Army Medical Center - Quality Services Division  
Clinical Practice and Referral Guidelines Administrator