

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Malnutrition Leads to Failure of Post-Cancer Facial Reconstruction**

#### **Simple blood test predicts success of post-cancer facial reconstruction**

[Rosemont, IL, January 1, 2014] An article appearing in the January issue of the *Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery* entitled “Low Prealbumin Level is a Risk Factor for Microvascular Free Flap Failure,” addresses the role of acute malnutrition in the failure of microvascular reconstructive surgery in head and neck cancer patients. The study was conducted by oral-maxillofacial surgeons at the Providence Cancer Center and University of Oregon in Portland, OR.

Recognizing that acute malnutrition is an established risk factor, the article’s authors, designed a study of 162 patients who had undergone head and neck microvascular reconstruction. The study had a dual purpose: (1) estimate and compare the odds of free flap failure in acutely malnourished head and neck cancer patients who had low blood protein levels and those with normal levels who were well-nourished, and (2) identify risk factors linked to free flap failure following microvascular reconstruction in these patients.

The study’s primary predictor and outcome variables were nutritional status (low versus normal prealbumin (blood protein) level) and free flap survival, respectively. The one-month free flap survival rates were evaluated using sophisticated statistical tests.

The results led the authors to conclude that acute malnutrition in head and neck cancer surgery patients undergoing microvascular free flap reconstruction was associated with a fourfold increase in the risk of free flap failure.

Read the complete study findings at *J Oral Maxillofac Surg.* 2014; 72:169-177

*The Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery is published monthly by the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons to present to the dental and medical communities comprehensive coverage of new techniques, important developments and innovative ideas in oral and maxillofacial surgery. Practice-applicable articles help develop the methods used to handle dentoalveolar surgery, facial injuries and deformities, TMJ disorders, oral cancer, jaw reconstruction, anesthesia and analgesia. The journal also includes specifics on new instruments and diagnostic equipment and modern therapeutic drugs and devices.*

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