

Mayo Clinic Minute: How proton beam therapy can treat cancers in the mouth

Video	Audio
	Cancer in the mouth and throat can impact speech, swallowing, smell and taste. Dr. Samir Patel says proton beam therapy's precision can help.
Samir Patel, M.D. Radiation oncology Mayo Clinic	"We can reduce the radiation spray, thereby minimizing collateral damage."
	Proton beam therapy also may better eradicate some types of tumors. But how does it work?
	"Imagine the tumor is a rock, and we need to paint this. You could use a spray gun and you'll paint the rock, but you will have splatter. Or you could take the rock and take a paintbrush, and, finally, in a detailed manner, paint the entire rock with no paint splatter."
	Cancers of the skull base, nasal cavity, sinuses, mouth and throat can all be good candidates for proton beam therapy.
	"If they are a candidate for radiation therapy to the head and neck, then proton beam therapy will be a part of their discussion."
	That discussion will include a team of surgeons and oncologists to determine best treatment options for a patient.
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Vivien Williams.