



## Transoral Robotic Surgery (TORS) in Head and Neck Area

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**Received:** April 22, 2021; **Accepted:** April 24, 2021; **Published:** April 30, 2021

Transoral robotic surgery (TORS) is a technique used to treat oral, throat, and skull base cancers using a minimally invasive robotic approach through the mouth and throat. The TORS procedure allows deeper access and dissection of suspicious lesions and neoplastic growths in the oral cavity and those that extend from the throat to the base of the skull. Robotic surgery allows the surgeon to operate in tight spaces without a large open incision.

Morbidity and mortality associated with increasingly radical doses of chemoradiotherapy have led many to question the current standard of care in head and neck cancer. Recently, surgeons have developed minimally invasive, transoral techniques which have demonstrated excellent survival and favourable functional outcomes. Transoral robotic surgery (TORS) is the most recent, cutting edge in the evolution of transoral techniques; TORS allows surgeons unprecedented access to and visualisation of the upper aerodigestive tract.

Robotic surgery has been more recently introduced for the treatment of benign and malignant diseases of head and neck area, known as Transoral Robotic Surgery (TORS). The most common indication for benign pathology is sleep apnea syndrome. TORS has been used for the removal of laryngeal cancers with the objective to improve functional and aesthetic

outcomes without worsening survival.

Robotic surgery has several advantages:

- Three-dimensional vision
- Stable vision, as the camera is maintained and mobilized by one of the articulated arms of the robot
- More precise and finer instrument control with greater freedom of motion in all three dimensions
- Suppression of physiological tremor

Due to these advantages, TORS decreases the number of tracheotomies, and allows more rapid swallowing rehabilitation and a shorter length of hospital stay. However, its disadvantages, mainly high cost amongst others, do not make robotic surgery the current treatment of choice for laryngeal tumours; transoral laser surgery is superior in most cases.

TORS is an efficient tool for exposure and resection of early staged tumors, situated in head and neck anatomical sites with difficult endoscopic access. Nevertheless, the following aspects of robotic surgery need to be studied: indications and oncological results in patients treated by TORS. Technical improvements are expected to the new-generation robots, in order to expand the use of robotic surgery in the ENT field.