

Meet Your Doctor

Photo

Mark L. Urken, MD

Chief, Division of Head and Neck Surgical Oncology,
Department of Otolaryngology
Director, Head and Neck Surgical Oncology of
Continuum Cancer Centers of New York
Co-Director, Institute of Head and Neck and Thyroid Cancers
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Your doctor, Mark L. Urken is an expert in two medical disciplines: He's one of the country's leading head and neck cancer specialists and he is also an internationally renowned microvascular surgeon. His combined skills provide enormous benefits to people with head and neck cancer: Patients can now simultaneously be treated for disease *and* facial restoration—procedures that formerly demanded many operations and months or years of recovery time.

People come from all over the country—and around the world—to be treated by Dr. Urken. Listed as one of *New York Magazine's* "Top Doctors" for the last ten years, Dr. Urken was also honored as one of the Leading Cancer Specialists in the Country in 2005. Over 10,000 people with cancer and other disease of the head and neck and thyroid have been treated by Dr. Urken since he began his practice in 1987.

Dr. Urken offers innovative treatment for thyroid and parathyroid disease. "Almost 90% of my patients with parathyroid disease," says Dr. Urken, "and a significant number of patients with thyroid diseases, will be able to have their surgery under local anesthesia. Often they are able to go home on the same day as their surgery."

For Dr. Urken, the ability to push "the envelope beyond what current practice has established, to take patients and restore their quality of life," is hugely rewarding. Working cooperatively with maxillofacial surgeon, Daniel Buchbinder, MD, DMD, and dentist and prosthetics expert, Devin J. Okay, DDS, Dr. Urken dramatically broadens curative and reconstructive possibilities for patients with head and neck cancer.

Oral cancer patients, for example—historically subjected to debilitating and deforming surgeries—today have astonishing restorative options thanks to Dr. Urken. In 1989 he created a new—now widely copied—procedure called *sensate free flap surgery*. Dr. Urken moves healthy tissue from one area of his patient's body to a part of the patient's mouth damaged by cancer surgery. Dr. Urken reattaches the tissue and the tiny blood vessels and nerves that give it life—and the transplanted tissue becomes a new part of the patient's mouth, complete with sensation.

Deeply committed to sharing his expertise with other physicians and medical professionals, Dr. Urken has published over 160 articles, authored 25 medical textbook chapters and coauthored an internationally acclaimed work on head and neck reconstructive surgery.

As founder and medical director of the non-profit *Thyroid, Head and Neck Cancer (THANC) Foundation*, Dr. Urken is pleased to support head and neck cancer research and educational work in the U.S. and abroad.

Medical Specialty
Head and Neck Surgery

Medical School
University of Virginia School
of Medicine, Charlottesville,
VA, 1981

Residency Training
Surgery, St. Elizabeth's
Hospital, Tufts Medical
School, Boston, MA, 1982-
1983; Otolaryngology,
Mount Sinai Hospital, New
York, NY, 1983-1986

Fellowship
Microvascular
Reconstructive Surgery of
the Head and Neck, Mercy
Hospital, Pittsburgh, PA,
1986