

# A Comprehensive Home Visit Study on Meal Preparation, Dietary Habits and Built Environment of Esophageal Cancer Patients

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## Study objective

Esophageal cancer patients are encouraged to eat small, slow, and often after esophagectomy. To investigate daily meal preparation processes and dietary habits of esophageal cancer patients within their home environments and built environment through direct observation

## Methods

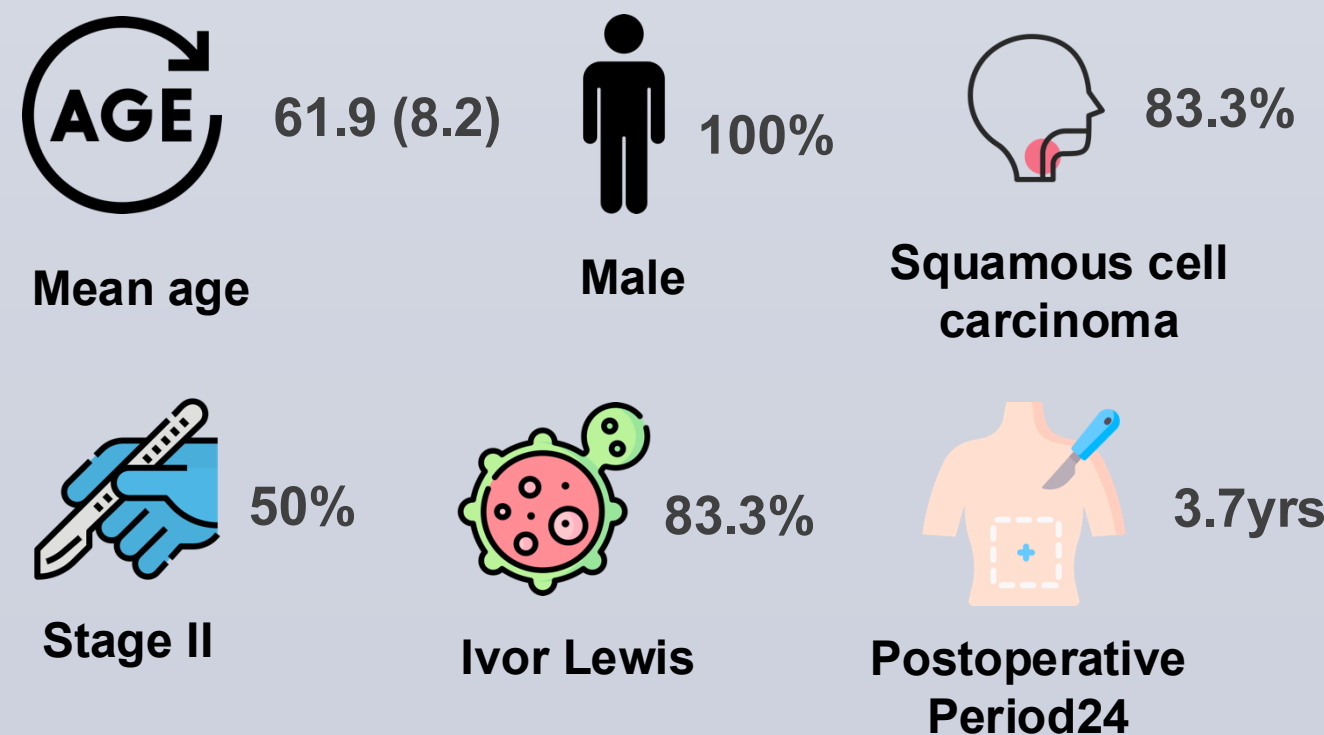
- **Study design** : Qualitative study
- **Study participants** 7 Adult esophageal cancer patients who had esophagectomy from tertiary cancer center in Seoul, Korea from April 2024 to May 2024.



### Semi-structured interview

- ✓ Living environment
- ✓ Access to groceries
- ✓ Meal preparation
- ✓ Dining experience

## Baseline Characteristics



## Results

### Meal Preparation, Dietary Habits and Built Environment



#### Living environment

- Most patients live in rural area (fishing villages, mountainous areas)
- Most patients live with family

#### Access to groceries



- Transportation issues
- Grocery shopping at local markets in the neighborhood.
- Grocery shopping ranged from daily to every 2 –3 days. Typically took 30 minutes to 1 hour.
- Growing their own vegetable at home or harvesting wild plants and edibles from nature
- Food choices were often influenced by availability rather than active selection
- Concerns about preservatives, country of origin, pesticide use, and organic or anti-oxidant (anti-cancer), and antibiotic use in eggs.
- Try to minimize to buy any processed food
- Not aware of the need to consume a variety of nutrients

- Eat 4 to 6 meals per day on average – snacking between meals
- Prefer : tofu, fish, beef, steamed vegetables, nuts, watery fruits
- Varied amount of intake depending on individuals
- Typical meal duration: about 30 minutes; number of meals per day varies. (4-6)
- Limited food choices for patients at regular restaurants – too spicy or too oily
- Dining out with friends can be uncomfortable
- Social pressure to consume alcohol, leading to discomfort to drink when accompanying friends



#### Meal preparation

- Meals were typically prepared by spouses or with the help of others
- Unwillingness and limited experience to prepare meals alone.
- Cook has limited knowledge about required nutrition– less protein and more vegetables
- Gas stove preferred over microwave Prefer steamed, boiled food. Minimize fried food
- Preferred home-cooked food.
- Rare use of delivery service
- Prepare meals freshly for each mealtime
- Typical meal preparation: about 60 minutes



#### Dining experience



## Discussion

Esophageal cancer survivors experience daily challenges to prepare and adopt recommended diet and eating habit due to limited information and social support.

More tailored dietary intervention would be necessary for esophageal cancer survivors.

## References

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