

Otolaryngology

The exemplary team of physicians, caregivers and researchers at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center continues to push the boundaries of what is possible in patient care through meaningful medical advancements and notable clinical achievements. This document highlights just a few of the stories that reflect our commitment to advanced services, innovative technology and forward-thinking care. Together, these accomplishments demonstrate how we remain at the forefront of medicine—bringing leading-edge solutions, improved outcomes and exceptional care to the patients and communities we serve.

Neurosurgeons at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center specialize in management, removal of rare skull base tumors.

Sudden neurological changes in otherwise healthy people are often symptoms of a serious health issue. Dizziness, numbness in the lips and mouth, a loss of taste or hearing can indicate a stroke, an inner ear disease, or Vertigo.

But sometimes these symptoms have a rarer underlying cause: tumors in the ear canal. Often misdiagnosed, these tumors, known as Vestibular Schwannomas (also called Acoustic Neuromas), form near where the brain meets the ear, on the nerves that help regulate hearing and balance. They are usually benign.

Some Schwannomas are slow growing and asymptomatic, making observation a reasonable option in some cases. However, intervention is necessary in many cases, since these tumors don't need to grow much before they start to compress surrounding cranial nerves, the cerebellum and the brainstem—causing debilitating symptoms that can't be managed with steroids or other therapies. That's when surgery becomes the best option.

Neurotologists at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center are experts in skull base tumors. Their specialized training



focuses on complex medical and surgical issues of the ear, hearing, balance, and the lateral skull base. Their expertise in radiosurgery and microsurgical resection to remove these tumors successfully and restore patients' quality of life is the reason Baylor St. Luke's sees a relatively high volume of these cases.

Read about how Baylor St. Luke's neurosurgeons restored one patient's balance and hearing after removing a rare brain tumor

Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center advances research in age-related vocal impairment.

A medical researcher at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center is advancing research on the aging voice, and the role of vocal fold atrophy and the larynx in older patients.

Vocal fold atrophy is an age-related thinning and loss of muscle bulk in the vocal cords, resulting in a weaker, breathy, or hoarse voice with reduced volume that makes it hard to be heard. The condition can be managed with voice therapy, injections, or implants.

Adam Szymanowski, MD, MS, Assistant Professor of Otolaryngology - Clinical at Baylor College of Medicine,

has been advancing research in vocal fold atrophy and the aging larynx. He was awarded an Early Career Seed Award from the US Department of Veteran Affairs and recently published his work in *The Laryngoscope* on vocal fold atrophy and chronic cough with the goal of decreasing procedural intervention. More recently, Dr. Szymanowski served as a panel moderator on the aging voice at the 2025 American Academy of Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery Annual Meeting.

[Read the abstract about Dr. Szymanowski's research](#)

Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center studies ground-breaking screening for HPV-related throat cancer through remote self-sampling.

HPV-related oropharyngeal cancer is the most common HPV-associated cancer in the United States, surpassing cervical cancer. Despite its prevalence, most cases are diagnosed at advanced stages, requiring aggressive treatment.

Now, an ongoing study at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center offers free throat cancer screening for people ages 45-69 that is not yet available to the public. The at-home test, followed by in-person exams for high-risk individuals, could lead to earlier diagnoses and better treatment outcomes for patients with throat cancer.

Called the TEJAS study, this groundbreaking cancer early detection/cancer screening aims to evaluate non-invasive and self-sampling techniques for the early detection of human papillomavirus (HPV)-related oropharyngeal (throat) cancer. The study is for men and women aged 45 to 69 years and focuses on blood, saliva, and urine markers that can detect the presence of cancer or assess the risk of developing it before cancer signs/symptoms develop.

Developing an effective early detection tool for HPV-related throat cancer could significantly reduce cancer death rates and lessen the side effects of treatment.

This study represents a critical step in the pursuit of personalized cancer prevention, aiming to identify individuals at high risk and detect cancer at its earliest, most treatable stage.

[Learn more about the TEJAS study](#)

