

Soundbite Script — Down But Not Out

Elizabeth Andekian, Nurse Practitioner, OSF HealthCare

“Ramsay Hunt is a form of facial paralysis that is caused by the herpes zoster infection and it affects the facial nerve, it causes inflammation or damage to the facial nerve and sometimes it affects the other cranial nerves as well.”

Elizabeth Andekian, Nurse Practitioner, OSF HealthCare

“He is kind of young to have this. Typically we are going to see this in adults 60 and older, but that is not a hard and fast rule so, theoretically, anyone can get it because it’s a reactivation of the chickenpox virus.”

Elizabeth Andekian, Nurse Practitioner, OSF HealthCare

“The prognosis for Ramsay Hunt is pretty variable. Typically, if treatment is started within three days, patients have a pretty good prognosis. The facial paralysis will resolve and with time the blisters will resolve on their own as will the scabs. However, if treatment is delayed patients can have permanent effects – permanent facial paralysis, hearing loss and dizziness and ringing in the ears or tetanus.”

Elizabeth Andekian, Nurse Practitioner, OSF HealthCare

“I think the frustrating thing for people with Ramsay Hunt, and I’ve had a patient with Ramsay Hunt, it’s hard to know how long these symptoms are going to last. We know patients who are treated within three days of symptoms appearing, tend to do better and have resolution of all of their symptoms, but there’s just no way to know for sure and I think the uncertainty is difficult for people.”