

- High-grade transformation in adenoid cystic carcinoma (AdCC-HGT) is a relatively recent but increasingly recognized event with important clinical implications.
- High-grade transformation (previously called dedifferentiation) in salivary tumors has to be distinguished from the conventional histological grading into low, intermediate and high-grade carcinomas.
- The molecular and genetic mechanisms behind high-grade transformation is at present largely unknown.
- High-grade transformation in salivary adenoid cystic carcinoma drastically increases the risk for neck node metastasis.
- AdCC-HGT requires a different postoperative management strategy than conventional adenoid cystic carcinoma.
- A very generous sampling of the surgical specimen is mandatory in order to detect any small focus of high-grade transformation.

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