

Title: Oral Cancer

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Date: 2010-03-02

Key words: oral cancer, tobacco use, cigarettes, oral sores, leukoplakia

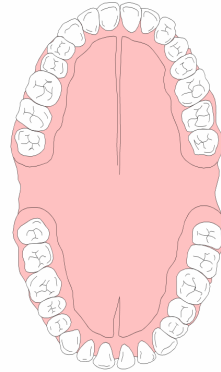
Abstract: Oral cancer screening by visual inspection is an effective screening tool when applied to people over 35 who smoke or drink, or both. This pamphlet describes the risk factors, symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment of oral cancer.

This document was created by a medical student enrolled in the Primary Care Clerkship at the University of Minnesota Medical School as part of the course project. The aim of the project is to present information on a medical topic in the format of a patient education handout. It does not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Minnesota Medical School physicians and faculty. These materials are provided for informational purposes only and are in no way intended to take the place of the advice and recommendations of your personal health care provider. The information provided may no longer be up to date since it has not been reviewed since the date of creation. The information provided should not be used to diagnose a health problem or disease, or as a means of determining treatment. In the event of a medical emergency, immediately contact a doctor or call 911.

How is it Treated?

After a diagnosis is made, the specialist will work with you to make a treatment plan. This often involves cancer specialists, surgeons, nutritionists, and nurses.

There are different kinds of treatment used for oral cancer. Surgery, radiation therapy, and chemotherapy may all be used.



For further information on oral cancer:

Medline Plus
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/oralcancer.html>

The Oral Cancer Foundation
<http://oralcancerfoundation.org>

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Oral Cancer



**University of Minnesota
Primary Care Clerkship
Patient Education Tool**

What is Oral Cancer?

Oral cancer is cancer that occurs in the mouth, tongue, lips, or throat.

There are 34,000 Americans diagnosed with oral cancer every year.

Am I at Risk?

Certain risk factors place people at increased risk of developing oral (mouth) cancer. The two greatest risk factors are:

- Tobacco use
- Excessive alcohol use

How Can I Prevent It?

You can decrease your chance of getting oral cancer by avoiding:

- Smoking cigarettes
- Chewing tobacco
- Smokeless tobacco
- Heavy alcohol use.

What are Warning Signs?

Possible signs of oral cancer usually last longer than two weeks. They include:

- Sores in your mouth that do not heal
- White or red patches in your mouth
- A lump or thickening in your mouth, tongue, or cheek
- Pain or difficulty with swallowing
- One-sided ear pain
- Loose teeth
- Lump in your neck

These symptoms may also occur in other diseases. You should see your doctor or dentist if you notice them.

How is it Diagnosed?

Special yearly check-ups are not needed to check for oral cancer. Your doctor or dentist can look for any possible cancer at your check-up or teeth cleaning.

If you have concerns or see a warning sign, make a visit with your doctor or dentist.

After seeing, your doctor or dentist may refer you to specialist if they are concerned about cancer. This may be a doctor who specializes in Ear, Nose, and Throat Surgery (ENT) or an Oral Surgeon.

The specialist may send a small piece of the worrisome area for testing. This helps to determine if it is cancer or not.

There may be other tests or x-rays that the specialist will want as well.