


ORAL CANCER: A Silent Killer

Katherine Erwin DDS, MPA
Morehouse School of Medicine



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- INTRODUCTION:
- The mouth is a mirror for general health and well-being.
- Poor oral health can interfere with vital functions such as breathing, eating, swallowing and speaking and significantly diminishes the quality of life.

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- INTRODUCTION:
- Recent research findings have identified possible associations between chronic oral infections:
 - diabetes,
 - heart and lung disease,
 - stroke,
 - low-birth weight/premature births.

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- INTRODUCTION:
- It is estimated that only 48% of the total population see a dentist on a regular basis.
- However, 98% of the population has some form of oral condition.
- It is estimated that 80% of systemic diseases appear as some form of oral manifestation.

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- Oral exams are important because health professionals can detect many systemic diseases including:
 - HIV/AIDS
 - Oral Cancer
 - Diabetes Mellitus
 - Liver Disease
 - Sjogren syndrome
 - certain medical treatments have oral health implications

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- Oral cancer will be diagnosed in an estimated 30,000 Americans this year.
- Each year 8,000 people die from oral cancer and its complications, killing roughly 1 person per hour.



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- If the definition is expanded to include cancer of the larynx, the risk factors are the same, the number of dx cases grow to 41,000 individuals, and 12,500 deaths per year in the US alone
- Oral cancer is the sixth most common cancer among men.

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- Oral cancer strikes men twice as often as it does women
- For African Americans, incidence peaks about ten years earlier.



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- . The overall survival rate for oral cancer in the general population is 52%, a survival rate worse than prostate, uterine, breast, bladder, cervical and colon cancers
- A 5-year survival rate for African American men with oral cancer is approximately 34%.
- With early detection and treatment, the 5-year survival rate can increase up to 85%.


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- Even though Oral cancer is typically a disease of older people (60-70), usually because of their longer exposure to the risk factors, it does occur in younger individuals.



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RISKS FACTORS:

- drink excessive amounts of alcohol
 - use of tobacco products
 - exposed to sunlight on a regular basis
 - have habits such as lip biting and cheek chewing
 - having ill-fitting dentures.
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RISK FACTORS:

- Tobacco has been implicated in as many as 95% of head and neck cancers; over 80% of these cancers are associated with alcohol use.
- Tobacco is the greatest preventable cause of cancer morbidity and mortality and causes profound worldwide economic losses every year—over \$150 billion in the United States alone

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RISK FACTORS:

- Cigarettes contain more than 43 cancer causing agents. Smokers are six times more likely than non smokers to develop some form of oral cancer.
- Cigars and pipes are perceived as less harmful but smokers are at increased risk for lip cancers in areas where the pipe stem rests. Cigars also take longer to burn and contain more tobacco than cigarettes.

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- **RISK FACTORS:**
- Spit tobacco, also known as chewing tobacco and snuff are considered smokeless tobacco products, harmful chemicals including nicotine are ingested.
- Chewing tobacco and snuff can cause cancer in the cheek, gums and lips.

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Other chemicals in chewing tobacco and snuff include:

- Nuclear waste
- Cancer causing agents
- Car battery chemicals
- Cyanide (a type of poison)
- Arsenic
- Lead
- Formaldehyde (normally used to embalm corpses)


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Warning Signs of Oral Cancer:

- sores on the face, neck mouth that do not heal within two weeks
- swellings, lumps or bumps on the lips, gums or other areas inside the mouth
- white (leukoplakia) or red (erythroplakia) patches in the mouth

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Warning Signs of Oral Cancer:

- Swelling of the jaw that causes dentures to fit poorly or become uncomfortable
 - Loose teeth
 - A change in the voice and / or
 - Pain in the ear.
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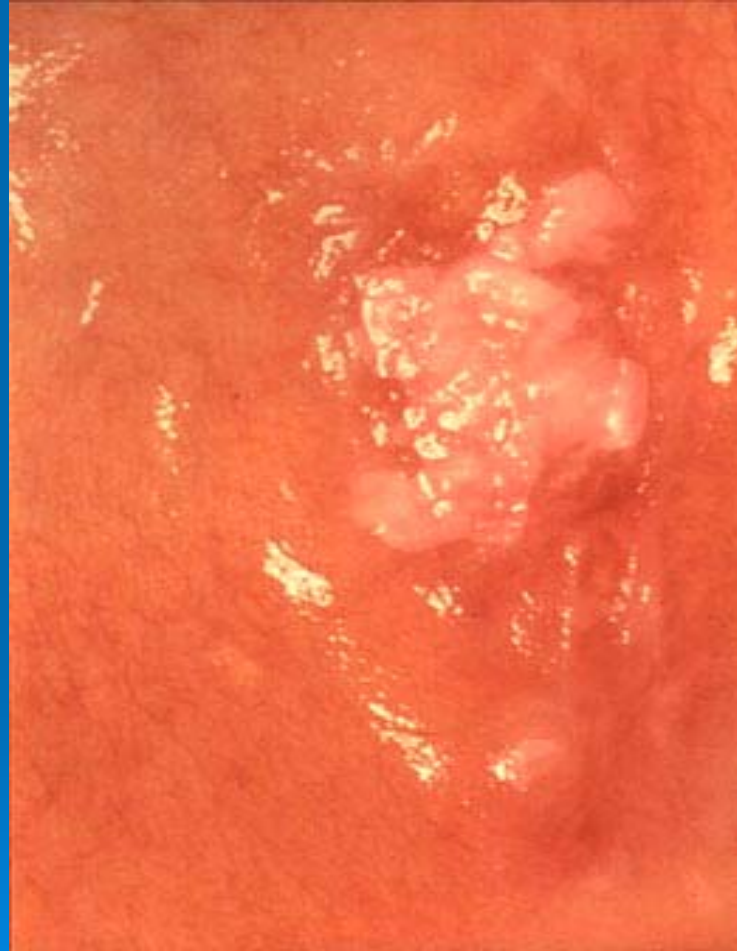
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Ventral Surface of Tongue



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Lateral Border of the Tongue



LABIAL MUCOSA



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- **THINGS TO DO:**
- **Perform Oral Exam:** Look in your mouth
- **ORAL Exam:** Bi-annual, ask your Dentist to perform an Oral Cancer exam.
- **REDUCE** and or **ELIMINATE** your alcohol and tobacco use
- **FOLLOW-UP** to make sure a definitive diagnosis is obtained when possible signs/symptoms of oral cancer are identified.