

Dental News and Views

Oral Cancer

An alert has been sounded on a disease that is often detected too late. The statistics tell the story: 34,000 people a year are diagnosed with oral cancer, and 7500 people dies from it. Just half of those survive 5 years, according to the American Cancer Society.

A typical oral cancer is life-threatening "largely because it is detected too late," says Richard Price, Consumer Advisor for the American Dental Association (ADA). "Many consumers aren't aware of oral cancer, even though it causes twice as many deaths as cervical cancer," he says.

The cornerstone of oral-cancer detection is a 5 minute exam that any dentist or a doctor can do during a regular check-up. Every dentist should do this on every patient at every 6 month or 1 year check-up.

Oral cancers, along with cancers of the larynx (voice box) are strongly linked to smoking. People who smoke or drink heavily are at higher risk. Chewing tobacco also may increase the risks, but about 25% of patients don't use tobacco.

Symptoms of oral cancer can include the following:

- Patches inside the mouth that are white, red or a mixture of red and white
- A sore on the lip or in the mouth that won't heal
- Bleeding in the mouth
- Loose teeth
- Difficulty wearing dentures
- A lump in the neck
- An earache

These symptoms can have many other causes, but you should see a doctor or dentist for diagnosis and any treatment.



Possible Dementia and Tooth Loss Link

The Journal of the American Dental Association (Oct. 2007) published a report indicating that tooth loss may predict the development of dementia later in life. Many previous studies have suggested that patients with dementia have poor oral health; however, this is the first study to suggest that the relationship is the same in the opposite direction: Tooth loss may lead to dementia.

AMES DENTAL CENTER

26 B E. U.S. 30
Scherverville, IN 46375

Phone: 219-865-8251
Fax: 219-865-8257
Email: jlamesdds@earthlink.net



It is no disgrace to start over. It is usually an opportunity.



If you believe it is possible, then you are willing to look like a fool while you accomplish it.



