

ORAL CANCER: DEADLY TO IGNORE

FACT SHEET

Approximately 75 percent of oral cavity and pharyngeal cancers are attributed to the use of smoked and smokeless tobacco. (These cancers include the mouth, tongue, lips, throat, parts for the nose, and larynx.)

Alcohol consumption is another risk factor. Combinations of tobacco and alcohol are believed to represent substantially greater risk factors than either substance consumed alone.

Other factors that can place a person at risk for these cancers are viral infections, immunodeficiency, poor nutrition, exposure to ultraviolet light (a major cause of cancer to the lips), and certain occupational exposures.



Relative survival rates for oral cancers are among the lowest of major cancers. Only one-half the number of persons diagnosed with oral cancer are alive five years after the diagnosis. Survival rates for oral cancer in minorities have decreased.

Oral cancer today occurs twice as often in males as in females. Age is also a factor--95 percent of oral cancers occur among persons over the age of 40 and 60 being the average age at diagnosis.

Signs and Symptoms of Oral Cancer

- a mouth sore that fails to heal or that bleeds easily
- a white or red patch in the mouth that will not go away
- a lump, thickening or soreness in the mouth, throat, or tongue
- difficulty chewing or swallowing food.

Most early signs of oral cancer are painless and are difficult to detect without a thorough examination by a dental professional.

Detection of oral cancer through periodic dental examinations can significantly reduce the risk of these life-threatening cancers.

SCHEDULE A DENTAL EXAM TODAY!

If you do not have dental insurance and live in a low-income household, you may qualify for FREE dental care at HealthLink Dental Clinic.



HealthLink Dental Clinic provides free dental care to low-income adults living in Bucks and Montgomery County*. For more information, visit us online at www.healthlinkdental.org or call (215) 364-4247

*Certain eligibility requirements apply.

Information Obtained From Centers for Disease Control online @ <http://www.cdc.gov>