

# Oral Cancer Detection

Oral cancer is one of the most common cancers today and has one of the lowest survival rates, with thousands of new cases being reported each year. Fewer than half of all people diagnosed with oral cancer are ever cured.

Moreover, people with many forms of cancer can develop complications-some of them chronic and painful-from their cancer treatment. These include dry mouth and overly sensitive teeth, as well as accelerated tooth decay.

If oral cancer is not treated in time, it could spread to other facial and neck tissues, leading to disfigurement and pain.

Older adults over the age of 40 (especially men) are most susceptible to developing oral cancer, but people of all ages are at risk.

Oral cancer can occur anywhere in the mouth, but the tongue appears to be the most common location. Other oral structures could include the lips, gums and other soft palate tissues in the mouth.

## Warning Signs

In general, early signs of oral cancer usually occur in the form of lumps, patchy areas and lesions, or breaks, in the tissues of the mouth. In many cases, these abnormalities are not painful

### ***THE DEADLY STATISTICS***

- *Every hour of every day, one American dies of oral cancer.*
- *The mortality rate associated with oral cancer has not improved significantly in the last 40 years.*
- *The death rate in the United States for oral cancer is higher than that of cervical cancer, Hodgkin's disease, cancer of the brain, liver, testes, kidney, or ovary.*
- *More than 30,000 Americans will receive an oral cancer diagnosis this year. In five years, only 57% will still be alive.*
- *27% of oral cancer victims do not use tobacco or alcohol and have no other lifestyle risk factors.*

in the early stages, making even self-diagnosis difficult.

Here are some additional warning signs:

- Hoarseness or difficulty swallowing.
- Unusual bleeding or persistent sores in the mouth that won't heal.
- Lumps or growths in other nearby areas, such as the throat or neck.

If a tumor is found, surgery will generally be required to remove it. Some facial disfigurement could also result.

## Prevention

Prevention is the key to staying off oral cancer. One of the biggest culprits is tobacco and alcohol use. Certain kinds of foods and even overexposure to the sun have also been linked to oral cancer. Some experts believe certain oral cancer risk factors are also hereditary.

A diet rich in fruits and vegetables is one of the best defenses against oral cancer. Maintaining good oral hygiene, and regular dental checkups, are highly recommended.

Oral cancer is one of the most curable of diseases when it's caught early. That's why a simple test has been developed using technology proven successful in identifying certain types of pre-cancerous abnormalities. It's called the ViziLite test, and it's particularly important for patients at increased risk for oral cancer.

When oral cancer is found at the earliest stage, treatment is quicker, simpler, less invasive and more than 90 percent successful.

## Who is at risk for oral cancer?

These factors increase your risk of oral cancer:

- tobacco use including "smokeless" tobacco
- heavy or chronic alcohol consumption
- viral infections, particularly HPV 16/18
- long term exposure to the sun (lip cancer)
- a history of oral leukoplakia or erythroplakia (white or red patches on the oral tissue)

Many reports suggest that head and neck cancer, particularly tongue cancer is increasing among young adults.

The ViziLite test, in combination with a conventional visual examination, provides a clearly improved screening procedure for oral abnormalities in patients at risk for oral cancer.

## What are the signs and symptoms of oral cancer?

- a sore that does not heal
- a white or red patch of tissue
- difficulty in swallowing
- a lump or mass in the mouth or neck
- hoarseness that lasts for a long period
- pain or numbness in the oral/facial region
- pain in the ear of long duration
- a change in voice

## How can people reduce their risk of oral cancer?

It is important to know if you are at risk, and to know the signs and symptoms of oral cancer. You can avoid tobacco and excessive alcohol. You can tell Dr. Mallonee about your risk factors and make sure to have a regular oral cancer screening at least once a year.

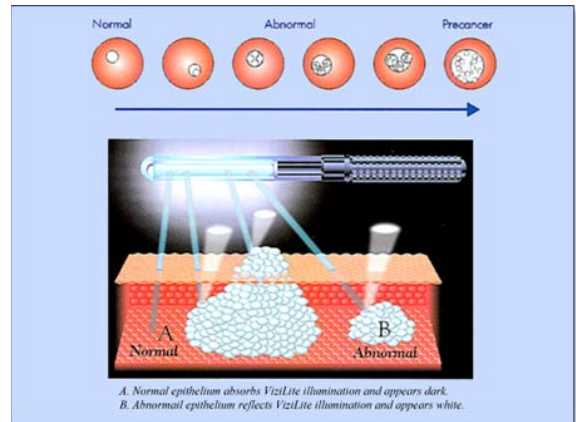
The ViziLite test can help identify abnormalities that might develop into cancer.

## Why does the ViziLite test make a difference?

The ViziLite test is a tool used by Dr. Mallonee to assist in the early detection of oral abnormalities. The abnormal areas that might not be seen in the conventional examination are more clearly identified with ViziLite. The ViziLite test improves the ability to identify, evaluate and monitor these abnormal areas, and that's why experts recommend it.

## How is the ViziLite test performed?

First, you swish a cleansing solution in your mouth and spit it out. Then, Dr. Mallonee views your mouth using the special ViziLite light source.



The **ViziLite** test is fast, painless, precise and inexpensive. It can help identify abnormalities that might develop into cancer and save your life. Dr. Mallonee is among a handful of practices in the US with this approved technique to help reduce the rate of oral cancer. Most medical/dental insurance companies are now recognizing this procedure.

*"Everyone over the age of 30, or individuals of any age who have used tobacco, should have an annual screening for oral cancer. Early detection saves lives." - The Oral Cancer Foundation*

*In November of 2001 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration cleared ViziLite as an adjunctive screening technology for use in the oral cavity, thus making it the only FDA-cleared medical device for such an application.*

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