

ORAL CANCER FACT SHEET

What is Oral or Mouth Cancer?

Oral cancer is cancer of the mouth, throat and lips. It is a very deadly disease if not caught early.

What are the early signs of Oral cancer?

- a sore on the lip or in the mouth that does not heal
- a lump on the lip or in the mouth or throat
- a white or red patch on the gums, tongue, or lining of the mouth
(which may be painless in the early stages)
- unusual bleeding, pain, or numbness in the mouth
- a feeling that something is caught in the throat
- difficult or painful chewing or swallowing
- swelling of the jaw that causes dentures to fit poorly
- a change in the voice
- pain in the ear

Need Help?

Contact:

The Baltimore City Health Department
Cancer Prevention, Education Screening and
Treatment Program (CPEST)

at
(410) 396-3718

For:

- ◆ Free Oral cancer screening for eligible people
- ◆ Information on Oral cancer and screening

If your insurance covers screening, contact your doctor.

Could I have oral cancer and not know it?

Yes. The early stages of oral cancer are often hard to see and not painful. Because you may not know you have oral cancer, it is important to ask your dentist or medical provider for an oral cancer exam.

Screening Saves Lives

Who can do an oral cancer exam?

- Dentist
- Dental Hygienist
- Doctor
- Nurse Practitioner
- Physician's Assistant



What can you do to prevent oral cancer?

- Do not smoke or use other tobacco products, and if you drink, drink only in moderation
- Minimize your exposure to the sun and wear lip balm with sunscreen
- Eat a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables
- Get an oral cancer examination at least one time every year

Why is an oral cancer exam important to me?

It can tell you if you have oral cancer early, so there is a better chance of a cure.

How often should I have an oral cancer exam?

At least one time every year

What places you at risk for getting oral cancer?

- Cigarette, cigars, snuff, chewing tobacco and pipes
- Alcohol
- Sun exposure
- Certain viruses
- Lack of fruits and vegetables

