Is your Mouth Showing These Cancer Warning Signs? Transcript

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Oral Cancer Awareness and Early Detection

Did you know that oral cancer is a significant global health concern? And when oral cancer is diagnosed late, there is a lower chance of survival. So what do you need to do about this?

What do you need to know? Well, you need to partner with your dentist. Your dentist is actually the first line of defense against oral cancer. And second, you need to know what to look for yourself.

So let's jump into this. Oral cancer is often diagnosed late in the game, with over half of them actually being advanced lesions before they're even found.

How Dentists Screen for Oral Cancer

Why is this? Well, Do you look in your mouth very often? You may not. The dentist should, however, if you are going to visit the dentist every six months, an oral cancer screening should be part of every exam.

What does that look like? Well, they should be looking around, pushing your tongue to the side, looking underneath your lips, looking way in the back of the throat, pulling your tongue out, looking at it on each side and having you raise it.

If none of that is happening, ask. Tell them, I would like you to do an oral cancer screening for me today. They see things that you simply can't see.

What are they looking for? What should you look for at home?

Warning Signs to Check at Home

Ulcers that don't resolve very quickly, raised red or white sores in your mouth that don't go away, that are sore, swelling, any trouble swallowing or soreness in the back of the throat, things that are on the tongue, on the side of the tongue, under the tongue, roof of the mouth.

These are common areas as are right on the inside of the lips. Now, what are risk factors that go into you maybe being more at risk to getting oral cancer?

Tobacco use is the number one risk factor, particularly oral tobacco use. So when it's tucked right here in the lip, well, that's a place that the body can't recover from very easily.

The second one is alcohol. There are also a lot of lesions that have been linked to HPV or human papilloma virus. So this is a common one, as is just poor oral hygiene.

Major Risk Factors for Oral Cancer

and gum disease. If you have a mouth that isn't healthy, you're more likely to get oral cancer. So what do you need to do? First thing you need to do is make sure that your dentist is doing an oral cancer exam every time you go for an exam.

And number two, you need to go for the exam. You need to be going in every six months. This is so crucial. Number three, take a look in your mouth now and then.

pull your cheeks aside, look underneath your lips, look underneath your tongue. And if you are doing any of those

habits that may contribute to an increased risk, think about how can you stop?

How can you give your mouth a better chance to stay healthy and to be well? Hopefully this information is helpful.

Prevention, Dental Visits, and Self-Checks

I want to make sure that you are not one of those people that has advancing oral cancer that may impact your life. My mission is to help you live well.

If this has been helpful, please subscribe, share it with others who may need to know this information and check back here often. I am here to help you understand how your mouth impacts your overall health and how you can stay well.