Oral Cancer and Oral Health

What Is It?

Oral cancer is cancer of the mouth, jaw or throat that can be fatal if not caught early. One in five Americans die from oral cancer every day. Life expectancy is less than five years if caught in later stages.

Who Is at Risk?

Everyone! Oral cancer does not just strike tobacco and alcohol users, although their risk is greater. Occurrence also is greater for older adults. Diagnosis of oral cancer of the mouth, tongue, lips or throat occurs seven times as often in persons 65 or older - some 28,000 Americans each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Signs and Symptoms

Early stages:
♦ None

Advanced stages:
♦ A sore in your mouth that will not heal
♦ Thick lump that you can feel anywhere on your tongue or cheek
♦ White or red patch anywhere in the mouth, on the gums or lips
♦ Difficulty swallowing food
♦ Numbness in the mouth

For more information about oral cancer, other oral health issues, and preventive care, please ask your registered dental hygienist and visit:

www.nypha.org
NYDHA
PO Box 16041
Albany, NY 12212

Treatment and Management

Treatment
♦ A biopsy may indicate a need for surgery, radiation and/or chemotherapy treatment.
♦ Your oncologist and dental providers will work together to formulate the best course of treatment and after care for you.

How to Protect Yourself
♦ Yearly examinations with screenings by your registered dental hygienist or dentist.