

**APRIL 2021**



**EVERY HOUR, EVERY DAY IN THE UNITED STATES, SOMEONE DIES FROM ORAL CANCER**

Oral cancer has a higher fatality rate than leukemia, Hodgkin's lymphoma, laryngeal cancer, testicular cancer, cervical cancer, and malignant melanoma. Survival rates for oral cancer have not improved significantly in the past 40 years. Due to COVID-19, dentists were closed for many months and people got behind on their dental appointments. Make sure you visit the dentist soon. Everyone 18 years and older needs to be screened for oral cancer annually.



**ORAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH**

ORAL CANCER FACTS:



When detected in the early stages, oral cancer has a greater than **80% survival rate**. When detected in the **late stages**, oral cancer has a less than a **22% survival rate**.



The Human Papilloma Virus (**HPV16 infection**) caused by sexual activity **increases your risk** of oral cancer.



Individuals between **11-26 years** should get the **HPV vaccine**. **Ages 27-45 years** who were **not already vaccinated should speak with their doctor** about their risk for new HPV infections.



The average age at diagnosis is 62, and **two-thirds of individuals with this disease are over age 55**, although it may occur in younger people.



**Men are twice as likely** to develop oral cancer than women. This is most likely related to men's higher use of alcohol and tobacco.



The **use of any form of tobacco and alcohol significantly increases your risk** of developing oral cancer.

**Oral cancer risk decreases by about 35% within 1-4 years of quitting smoking.**

## SUCCESS STORY

**LARRY MACKEY, AGE 55**

**Before:** 1 pack a day  
**After:** Smoke-free  
**Years Smoked:** 40 years

Health Coach, Vickie contacted Larry and he explained that he had **really wanted to quit smoking but did not have a lot of confidence in his ability to quit smoking.** Vickie, guided me to the realization that big results can happen with just a few small steps at a time.

Initially, Larry started to panic about not smoking, but Vickie helped him develop strategies to identify triggers and things that were bothering him that were connected to smoking. Larry noted that a factor in his success was that Vickie was a good listener. **“Vickie talked to me, gave me accountability, she believed in me which gave me confidence in myself.”**

**What was the turning point that led you to seek a healthier lifestyle?** “My primary motivator for quitting was that I wanted to see and spend time with my granddaughter.” He wanted to see her grow up and make memories with her “Papa”.



## ORAL CANCER & DENTAL HEALTH



### LIP SERVICE

Use lip balm SPF 15 or higher that protects against both UVA and UVB rays. Reapply frequently.



### BEWARE - SEEK CARE

Sores, red and white patches, rough spots on the gums, lips, or inside mouth lasting 2+ weeks.



### CALL IT QUILTS

Avoid tobacco including cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip.



### WATER WINS

Drink 8-10 glasses of water daily. Avoid sugary drinks. Minimize alcohol consumption.



### DAILY DOSE

Eat at least five servings of non-citrus fruits and crunchy vegetables every day.



### A MOUTH FULL

Brush and floss your teeth daily. Visit your dentist yearly and request a cancer screening.