



Cadillac Family Dental  
a mercury-free office

## Oral Cancer Screenings

Cadillac Family Dental is concerned about your overall health and well being. Because oral cancer is one of the deadliest forms of cancer, an oral cancer screening is included in your dental exam for early detection, increasing the rate of successful treatment. Only about half the people diagnosed with oral cancer survive more than five years. Cancer in the neck and mouth is often painless in the early stages, spreads quickly, and often isn't detected until it's very advanced. Most oral cancers occur on the upper lip, the tongue and in the floor of the mouth. Anyone can get oral cancer, but the risk is higher if you are male, over age 40, use tobacco or alcohol or have a history of head or neck cancer.

Cancer of the lower lip is the most frequent site for cancer of the oral cavity. Avoid long sun exposure. If you have to be out in the sun, wear a broad-brimmed hat and use a strong sunscreen lip balm (in addition to your overall high SPF sunscreen). Seek the shade, especially between 10 AM and 4 PM. Apply 1 ounce (2 tablespoons) of sunscreen to your entire body 30 minutes before going outside. Reapply every two hours, or immediately after swimming or excessive sweating.

Smoking, tobacco, heavy or frequent drinking, sun exposure and personal history of head and neck cancer are risk factors for oral cancer. Symptoms include a sore that won't heal, red or white patches, difficulty swallowing, or a lump on your neck. Some experience difficulty or pain when swallowing, loose teeth, or bleeding in the mouth. Anyone with these symptoms should see a doctor or dentist so that any problem can be diagnosed and treated as early as possible. Most often, these symptoms do not mean cancer. An infection or another problem can cause the same symptoms.

The Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER can talk with callers about ways to quit smoking and about groups that offer help to smokers who want to quit. Groups offer counseling in person or by telephone. Other information can be found at the Federal Government's smoking cessation Web site, <http://www.smokefree.gov> under "National Cancer Institute Information Resources".

Other sources of information:

- <http://www.skincancer.org/>
- [www.oralcancerfoundation.org](http://www.oralcancerfoundation.org)