

Health Update

Have you been screened for oral cancer? **APRIL IS ORAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH**

Oral cancer is not common, but it is dangerous and potentially deadly. Each year, about 50,000 Americans are diagnosed with mouth and throat cancers, which claim one life *every hour of every day*. The mortality rate is alarmingly high – not because oral cancer is hard to detect or diagnose, but because it is often discovered late.

Anyone can develop oral cancer. However, certain factors increase your risk, including:

- ***Tobacco*** – smoking cigarettes, cigars and pipes as well as snuff, chew and smokeless tobacco
- ***Alcohol*** – especially when combined with tobacco use
- ***HPV*** – exposure to the sexually transmitted human papillomavirus, (HPV16) strain
- ***Physical trauma*** to the mouth, throat or neck
- ***Infectious disease***
- ***Poor oral hygiene and/or nutrition***



How can you protect yourself from oral cancer? Get screened! A screening can be performed at your next dental visit, or sooner if you notice possible signs of the disease, such as: white or red patches in the mouth, bleeding mouth sores that don't heal, prolonged hoarseness, a lump or thickening in the mouth or neck area, difficulty chewing or swallowing, or other oral abnormalities that last more than two weeks. Also, you can ward off oral cancer by avoiding tobacco, limiting alcohol, eating well, and practicing good oral hygiene!

Contact your family dentist or oral/maxillofacial surgeon to schedule an oral cancer screening. Or visit www.oralcancerfoundation.org for a list of local screenings. To learn about **Smoking Cessation Programs**, visit www.oceanmonmouth.org or call your NJCEED (Cancer Education Early Detection) Program office:



NJCEED Monmouth County: 732-933-3952

NJCEED Ocean County: 732-557-3202 (English) 732-557-3207 (Spanish)

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OCEAN MONMOUTH HEALTH ALLIANCE IS A REGIONAL CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION COALITION FUNDED BY THE NJ DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, OFFICE OF CANCER CONTROL AND PREVENTION. OUR PURPOSE IS TO REDUCE THE STATE'S CANCER BURDEN AND IMPROVE HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE WITH, OR AT RISK FOR, CANCER AND OTHER CHRONIC DISEASE IN OCEAN AND MONMOUTH COUNTIES. FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CONTROL IN NJ GO TO WWW.NJCANCER.GOV