



An Important Reason to Visit Your Dentist

Though somewhat of a silent disease, oral cancer can easily be prevented with routine dental check-ups. According to the American Dental Association, 8,000 people die of oral cancer every year (that's about one person every hour!), with 30,000 people affected annually. And if you're male, you're two times more likely to be affected, with 20,000 men alone affected yearly.

PREVENTING ORAL CANCER

Be sure to visit your dentist regularly—he or she will best be able to detect signs of oral cancer ... the earlier, the better. Also, stay away from tobacco products; smokers are six times more likely to develop oral cancer than non-smokers.

EASY, AT-HOME PREVENTION

In addition to visiting your dentist, you should regularly check your mouth for signs of oral cancer. Using a mirror, look for the following signs and symptoms of oral cancer:

- A sore that bleeds and doesn't easily heal
- A color change in oral tissue
- Pain, tenderness or numbness in the mouth or on the tongue
- Difficulty chewing, speaking, swallowing or moving the jaw or tongue
- A lump inside the cheek
- A white or red patch on the gums, tongue, tonsil or lining of the mouth
- Swelling of the jaw
- Pain in the teeth or jaw region or loosening of the teeth
- Change in voice
- Drastic weight loss
- A lump or mass in your neck

Contact your dentist immediately if you notice any of these symptoms. Prevention is your key to a healthy smile!

For information on the TRICARE Dental Program, or to find more "Dental Health 101" tips, visit us online at www.TRICAREdentalprogram.com.

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