

Open Wide

Your dentist and dental hygienist inspect your mouth for oral cancers when you show up for your regular dental cleanings.



Between visits, take note of these early warning signs, and see your dental professional if they do not improve or disappear after 2 weeks:

- A sore, or soreness or irritation that doesn't go away
- Red or white patches, or pain, tenderness, or numbness in your mouth or lips
- Lumps, thickening tissues, rough spots, crusty or eroded areas
- Difficulty chewing, swallowing, or moving your jaw or tongue
- A change in the way your teeth fit together when you close your mouth

Always call your dentist right away if you have any immediate concerns. Those at high risk of developing oral cancer have traditionally been heavy alcohol drinkers and smokers over age 50. But today, cancer is occurring in younger, nonsmokers. The sexually transmitted HPV is related to some cancers in younger people.