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ISSN: 2247-2452

Indexed in PubMed and Medline

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ORAL CANCER

Journal of Oral Health and Dental Management



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INTRODUCTION

Cancer is defined as the uncontrollable growth of cells that invade and cause damage to surrounding tissue. Oral cancer appears as a growth or sore in the mouth that does not go away. Oral cancer, which includes cancers of the lips, tongue, cheeks, floor of the mouth, hard and soft palate, sinuses, and pharynx (throat), can be life threatening if not diagnosed and treated early.

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Major Symptoms:

- Swellings/thickenings, lumps or bumps, rough spots/crusts/or eroded areas on the lips, gums, or other areas inside the mouth.
- The development of velvety white, red, or speckled (white and red) patches in the mouth
- Unexplained bleeding in the mouth.
- Unexplained numbness, loss of feeling, or pain/tenderness in any area of the face, mouth, or neck.
- Persistent sores on the face, neck, or mouth that bleed easily and do not heal within 2 weeks.
- A soreness or feeling that something is caught in the back of the throat.
- Difficulty chewing or swallowing, speaking, or moving the jaw or tongue.
- Hoarseness, chronic sore throat, or change in voice.
- Ear pain.
- A change in the way your teeth or dentures fit together.
- Dramatic weight loss.

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Risk factors for the development of oral cancer include

- **Smoking:** Cigarette, cigar, or pipe smokers are six times more likely than nonsmokers to develop oral cancers.
- **Smokeless tobacco users:** Users of dip, snuff, or chewing tobacco products are 50 times more likely to develop cancers of the cheek, gums, and lining of the lips.
- Excessive consumption of alcohol: Oral cancers are about six times more common in drinkers than in nondrinkers.
- Family history of cancer.
- Excessive sun exposure, especially at a young age.

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Surgeries for Oral Cancer:

- Maxillectomy (can be done with or without orbital exenteration)
- Mandibulectomy (removal of the mandible or lower jaw or part of it)
- Glossectomy (tongue removal, can be total, hemi or partial)
- Radical neck dissection
- Moh's procedure or CCPDMA
- Combinational e.g. glossectomy and laryngectomy done together.
- Feeding tube to sustain nutrition.

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Editor's Biography

Jun Murakami completed his Ph.d from Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology, Graduate school of Medicine and Dentistry, Okayama University, Japan in "Silencing of O6-methylguanine-DNA methyltransferase gene by methylation of an upstream promoter increases the sensitivity of oral cancer cells to alkylating agents used in their chemotherapy". He completed his DDS from Okayama University of Dental School, Okayama, Japan in 1999. He is Assistant Professor in the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology, Graduate school of Medicine and Dentistry, Okayama University, Japan (2003-present). He has authored/co-authored a number of papers on oral cancer in different national and international journals.

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Research Interests:

Oral Cancer and Anti-Cancer Agents

