

Oral Cancer

What is Oral Cancer?



There are two kinds of oral cancers:

- Oral Cavity Cancer- starts in the mouth.
- Oropharyngeal Cancer-starts in the part of the throat just behind the mouth.

Signs and Symptoms

The most common symptom of oral cancer is a sore in the mouth that bleeds easily and does not heal. Other signs and symptoms may include:

- Pain that does not go away.
- Lump or thickening in the cheek.
- White or red patch on the gums, tongue, tonsil, or lining of the mouth,
- Sore throat
- Feeling that something is caught in the throat.



Are You at Risk?

Smoking, smokeless tobacco, and alcohol substantially increase the risk of developing oral cancer. Tobacco use accounts for most cases of oral cancer. Other risk factors include:

- Poor nutrition.
- Irritation.
- Human Papillomavirus. (HPV)
- Ultraviolet light- Cancer of the lip can be caused by exposure to the sun.
- Persistent bad breathe.
- Numbness of tongue or other areas of the mouth, age, and gender.

How is it Diagnosed?

Health-care providers including, doctors, nurses, dentists, and dental hygienists can identify abnormal changes in oral tissues and detect cancer at an early stage.

If the medical checkup shows an abnormal area, a small sample of a tissue may be removed to confirm cancer is present.

What are Common Treatments?

Treatment options include: surgery, radiation therapy, and chemotherapy.

What Can You Tell Me About This Cancer in North Dakota?

- An average of 70 new cases of oral cancer are diagnosed each year in North Dakota, which is two percent of all cancers diagnosed in the state.
- The incidence of oral cancer is higher among men than women.
- The average annual incidence rate for men is 14.6 per 100,000 men, and the average annual incidence rate for women is 6.4 per 100,000.
- Since the incidence is higher among men than women, the age-specific rates for men are higher.
- The incidence of oral cancer is similar across the state.

Planning for a cancer-free future.