

Oral Cancer Screening

Nip in the bud



Head and Neck Cancers are scary: why?

Head and neck cancer is the most distressing cancer for patients and their families as it affects appearance, ability to speak and ability to eat. Pain which is difficult to treat, infection, disfiguring surgeries with wounds that may not heal are often accompanied with advanced disease. In addition psychological distress, loneliness and isolation are often experienced by patients. Head and neck cancers are the 8th most common cancers in north America. Five-year survival data reveal overall disease specific survival rates of almost 60%, although those that do survive often endure major functional, cosmetic, and psychological burden due to dysfunction of their ability to speak, swallow, breathe, and chew.

Head and neck cancers often start in the moist surfaces that line the mouth, throat, and nose. Most of these cancers are a type called squamous cell carcinoma. Squamous cell carcinoma begins in the flat squamous cells that make up the thin layer of tissue on the inner surface of the structures in