

Self-examinations can help you detect **Oral Cancer** :::::

**Early detection is the first step
toward a successful treatment.**

Self-exams are fast, safe, and easy. Simply check your face, mouth, and throat once a month to see if you notice any of the following:

- A sore on the lip or mouth that does not heal
- A lump on the lip or in the mouth or throat
- A white or red patch on the gums, tongue, or lining of the mouth
- Unusual bleeding, pain, or numbness in the mouth
- A sore throat that does not go away, or a feeling that something is caught in the throat
- Difficulty or pain with chewing or swallowing
- Persistent cough or hoarseness
- Moles that change in color or size

If you find any of these warning signs, it doesn't mean that you have cancer. You should have the condition examined by your physician or dentist. Your dentist or dental hygienist should check for oral cancer as a part of every dental checkup.

You are at greatest risk if you...



Use tobacco: (i.e. cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, cigars, and/or pipes)



Drink alcohol heavily



Stay in the sun without sunblock or lip balm

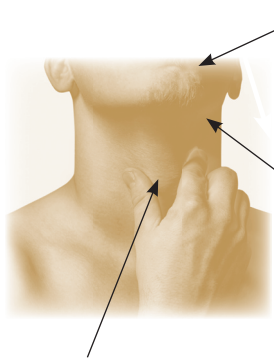


Have a diet low in fruits and vegetables

VDH

vdh.virginia.gov/oral-health

Self-examinations can help you detect Oral Cancer



Face: Feel your face with your fingertips. Look for changes in skin color, moles, lumps, bumps, and sores. Check for evenness of your face. Both sides should be the same size and shape.

Neck: Press gently on both sides of your neck and under your jaw, checking for lumps and bumps. Leaning your neck forward, feel the base of your skull for any swollen or tender areas.

Throat and Neck: Hold your Adam's apple between your thumb and forefinger. Swallow and check your windpipe for any lumps or bumps.



1. and 2. Lips: Pull your upper and lower lip out and feel your lips with your index finger and thumb. Check for swelling, tenderness, or changes in color.

3. Cheeks: Using your index finger and thumb, pull your cheeks out. Look inside to check for swelling, sores, or changes in color.

4. Gums: Lift your lips to look at and feel your gums for lumps, bumps, sores, bleeding, or changes in color.



5. Roof of Mouth: Using your index finger, press gently on the roof of your mouth, feeling for lumps, swelling, or soreness.

6. Tonsils and Throat: Open your mouth and check your tonsils and throat for lumps, swelling, or changes in color.

7. Floor of Mouth: Point the tip of your tongue to the roof of your mouth and feel the floor of your mouth for lumps or changes in color.

8. Tongue: Stick out your tongue. Looking at both sides, check for sores or changes in color.