

National Mouth Cancer Awareness Month: 10 facts about disease and symptoms to look out for

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It's National Mouth Cancer Awareness Month during November - an event which aims to raise awareness of the risks and symptoms.

It is estimated 60,000 people in the UK will be diagnosed with the disease within the next decade, and without early detection half will die.

Symptoms to look out for:

- Red, or red and white, patches on the lining of your mouth or tongue
- One or more mouth ulcers that do not heal after three weeks
- A swelling in your mouth that lasts for more than three weeks
- Pain when swallowing (dysphagia)
- A tooth, or teeth, that becomes loose for no obvious reason
- A persistent pain in the neck
- A hoarse voice
- Unexplained weight loss
- Unusual changes in your sense of taste
- Earache
- The lymph nodes (glands) in your neck become swollen

Facts about mouth cancer:

- A diet rich in fruit and vegetables reduces oral cancer risk. More than half of oral cancer cases in the UK are linked to insufficient fruit and vegetable intake.
- Almost three-quarters of oral cancers in men and more than half in women in the UK are caused by smoking.
- Using smokeless tobacco increases oral cancer risk.
- Betel quid is widely used in many parts of Asia and in some Asian communities in other regions. Chewing betel quid with or without tobacco increases oral cancer risk.
- More than a third of oral cancers in men and almost a fifth in women in the UK are linked to alcohol consumption.
- The most commonly diagnosed types of oral cancer are cancer of the mouth and cancer of the tongue.
- More than 9 in 10 people diagnosed with cancer of the lip will survive the disease for at least five years.
- Around half of patients diagnosed with cancer of the oral cavity will survive their disease for at least five years.
- Around 6,500 people were diagnosed with oral cancer in 2010 in the UK, that's 18 people every day.

Almost 2,000 people died of oral cancer in 2010 in the UK, that's around five people every day.