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## Smoking and Oral Cancer (1972)

American Dental Association

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### Recommended Citation

American Dental Association, "Smoking and Oral Cancer (1972)" (1972). *Patient Dental Health Education Brochures*. 292.

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1972



Smoking  
and  
Oral Cancer

Don't start  
smoking.  
If you  
do smoke now,  
stop.

That is the advice many dentists and physicians are giving their patients. These doctors have examined the available evidence and believe that smoking is a serious health hazard.

Most people know that when they smoke, they increase their risk of developing lung cancer. What they do not realize is that they also run a higher risk of developing cancer of the mouth and throat. A recent scientific study showed that the number of deaths from this disease among smokers is about four times greater than the number of deaths among nonsmokers. Also, smokers develop more serious forms of periodontal disease.

Tobacco in any form can cause cancer of the mouth and throat. So do not believe that you can avoid cancer by switching from cigarettes to a pipe or even to cigars.

This year, an estimated 15,000 people with oral cancer will be diagnosed. Within five years, many of these people will be dead. Each year, approximately 7,000 people die from oral cancer. One reason for this high death rate is that oral cancer victims do not recognize the need to see their dentist or physician until it becomes too late for treatment to be successful.

**You should know the five warning signals of oral cancer. They are:**

1. A sore on the lips, gums, or inside the mouth that will not heal.
2. Any swelling of the neck, lips, tongue or palate.
3. A numbness or loss of feeling in any part of the mouth.
4. Pain or soreness in the mouth or throat that cannot be attributed to any apparent cause.
5. Bleeding of the mouth with no apparent cause.

So do not wait if you feel or see an abnormal area in your mouth. See your dentist immediately. He can perform a thorough examination of your mouth and throat that will reveal any cancerous or pre-cancerous conditions. Early detection of oral cancer makes successful treatment possible.

**IF YOU DON'T SMOKE  
DON'T START**

**IF YOU SMOKE — STOP**

**See Your Dentist Regularly —  
Regular Examination  
of the Mouth  
Will Make Early Detection  
and Treatment  
of Oral Cancer Possible**



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