



# What are the Symptoms of Oral Cancers?

Early detection of oral cancers can help save lives, so it's important to know what you should be looking out for.

Taking a look inside your mouth on a regular basis can assist in early detection of any unusual sores or lesions.

Checking for signs of oral cancer is also a part of your dentist's regular check-up procedure. A dentist is able to assess your mouth thoroughly for abnormalities, so it's vital to visit your dentist regularly.

You can also look for the signs yourself in-between visits, by checking your lips, gums, tongue, cheek and inside of your mouth for irregularities.

Signs and symptoms to be aware of include:

- Red or white patches in your mouth
- An ulcer or sore that does not heal and/or bleeds easily
- A blood blister that does not heal
- A thick or hard spot or lump that may or may not be painful
- A roughened or crusted area or sore
- Numbness anywhere in your mouth
- Pain and tenderness
- Changes in the way your teeth bite together
- Pain when chewing or swallowing
- Difficulty when swallowing or moving your jaw
- Difficulty moving your tongue
- Changes in your speech such as slurring or lack of clarity
- Loose teeth and/or sore gums
- Altered taste
- Swollen lymph glands

Looking after your teeth helps keep your mouth in optimum condition. Ways to maintain good oral health include:

- Brush your teeth twice a day
- Floss your teeth once a day
- Consume a healthy diet rich in vegetables and lean protein. Reduce your intake of sugary foods and beverages
- Drink plenty of fluoridated tap water
- Drink no more than two standard alcoholic drinks per day
- Don't smoke
- Check your mouth regularly for any unusual sores and lesions
- Have regular dental check-ups where your dentist will look at the health of both your teeth and your mouth

Most importantly, do not delay seeking immediate advice from a dentist or medical professional if you notice any unusual symptoms or sores on your lips or in your mouth.

For more information on oral cancers and looking after your mouth, visit [www.dentalhealthweek.com.au](http://www.dentalhealthweek.com.au)

Together we can give oral cancer awareness a voice.

