



The Head and Neck Cancer Alliance (HNCA), is the premiere non-profit organization dedicated to saving lives and improving the patient's quality of life via an on organized and strategic alliance of all stakeholders. The united and collaborative approach focuses on prevention; early detections; advocacy, patient and clinician resources; advocacy and research.

For more information go to, www.headandneck.org

What is OHANCAW@?

Oral, Head and Neck Cancer Awareness Week® (OHANCAW®) is a pinnacle week aimed at raising awareness of oral, head and neck cancers and saving lives. The week is one aspect of a number of events held throughout the year to educate the public, legislators, health professionals, media and other stakeholders on these cancers. This program is coordinated and sponsored by the Head and Neck Cancer Alliance (HNCA) in partnership with more than 400 partners world-wide. The weeklong series of events aim to educate the public about these potentially life-threatening but eminently treatable cancers and to promote prevention, screening and early detection. OHANCAW® is highlighted by the free screenings and related activities held at participating medical centers across the country. The screenings are quick, painless, and designed to advance early diagnosis, which can lead to better outcomes.

When is OHANCAW@?

The Oral, Head and Neck Cancer Awareness Week® is in the month of April and this year's 20th annual OHANCAW® will be held from April 8-15. The primary focus will be directed toward awareness activities occurring during this week, but HNCA is encouraging all supporters to host throughout the year at a time that works best for their group to host a free screening or awareness event. For more information, go to www.headandneck.org, e-mail dhuynh@headandneck.org or call 866-792-4622.

Oral, Head and Neck Cancer Facts

Oral, head and neck cancers refer to many types of cancers, including those that arise in the nasal cavity, sinuses, lips, mouth, thyroid glands, salivary glands, throat or larynx (voice box). In 2018, there will be more than 650,000 new cases of cancer of the oral cavity, pharynx, throat and thyroid world-wide, and approximately 14,240 deaths from these cancers in the United States. Cancers of the oropharynx (tonsil and base of tongue) are increasing in incidence, particularly in younger nonsmokers, and it is estimated that these cancers alone will account for over 13,000 cases per year in the United States based on statistical review, making them the most common HPV-related cancers in the U.S.

Signs and Symptoms

Most oral cancers arise on the lips, tongue or the floor of the mouth. They also may occur inside your cheeks, on your gums or on the roof of your mouth. Oropharyngeal cancers related to HPV are often found in the tonsil or base of tongue. Other head and neck cancers arise from the voice box or throat, or from salivary (spit) glands or the thyroid gland.

Some early signs and symptoms include:

- A red or white spot in your mouth that doesn't heal or that increases in size
- Sore throat or swollen tonsil
- Changes in your voice
- A lump in your neck
- Earache
- Difficulty swallowing

Risk Factors Tobacco (including smokeless tobacco) and alcohol use are very high risk factors for oral, head and neck cancers, particularly those of the tongue, mouth, throat and voice box. People who use both tobacco and alcohol are at greater risk for developing these cancers than people who use either tobacco or alcohol alone. (Source: National Cancer Institute).

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) and Throat Cancer Researchers have correlated the increase of head and neck cancer incidence in young adults, a group traditionally at low risk, to the human-papillomavirus (HPV); a cancer-causing virus that can be transmitted through oral sex. Many studies support that oropharyngeal cancers – those affecting the tonsils, back of the mouth (throat) and base of the tongue – have been on the rise since the mid-1980s, and currently 50-70 percent of these cases are caused by HPV infections.