



## Oral Cancer Awareness Month

*HPV & Oral Cancer Prevention*



April is Oral Cancer Awareness Month, an opportunity for all health care providers to heighten their awareness about the importance of oral cancer prevention. In the US, mouth cancers are diagnosed in over 100 people each day, and someone dies from oral cancer every hour of every day. Health care professionals are part of the first line of defense in detecting

oral cancer in its early stages. Beyond the dental office, oral cancer screenings should be conducted by health professionals including nurses, nurse practitioners, midwives, physicians, and physician assistants.

The HPV vaccine, the only cancer prevention vaccine, is the most effective method for preventing oropharyngeal, cervical, and other HPV-related cancers. As oral health advocates, health care teams in dental and medical practices are perfectly positioned to provide HPV anticipatory guidance and resources for parents of children starting at age 9 to increase HPV vaccination rates and decrease rates of HPV and related cancers. HPV vaccine catch up is also available through age 45!

We encourage you to take time this month to learn more about HPV and oral cancer. Check out these great articles and HPV health literacy resources:

- [Inadequate Knowledge: HPV and Oropharyngeal Carcinoma](#), Medscape Oncology Commentary 2024
- [Case Western Reserve University-led research team discovers new method to test for oral cancer](#), The Daily 2024
- [Making the case for interprofessional education and practice collaboration to address rising rates of HPV-associated oropharyngeal cancers](#), Journal of Dental Education 2022
- [Improving HPV Vaccine Confidence: An Interprofessional Challenge](#), All 4 Oral Health 2022
- OHNEP [Oral Health and HPV](#) / [La salud bucal y el virus del papiloma humano](#) Fact Sheets
- Learn more at the [Oral Cancer Foundation](#) website.