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### How can cancer of the mouth be detected?

Cancer of the mouth can be found by dentists during routine examination. It is a painless examination that doesn't take very long. It is wise to have regular check ups at your dentist even if you have dentures.

Some people see their doctor with a sore throat or a painful mouth.

If your dentist or doctor are concerned in any way they will refer you to a specialist unit like ours where you will undergo further investigation and if necessary a treatment plan can be commenced.



## Face Facts about Oral Cancer

## What is oral cancer?

It is a malignant growth that can be found anywhere in the mouth.

## Is cancer of the mouth common?

The incidence of mouth cancer is increasing. There are approximately 3400 new cases of mouth cancer reported every year in the United Kingdom.

The North West region of England has one of the highest incidences of mouth cancer in the UK. However if found early enough mouth cancer can be successfully treated in several different ways.

## Who gets cancer of the mouth?

Anyone can develop cancer of the mouth, however it seems to be found more in men than in women and in general, in people over the age of 40.

Last year this unit alone treated 120 new cases of mouth cancer, that is approximately 5% of all mouth cancers in the UK.

## How would you recognise cancer of the mouth?

The most common sign of mouth cancer is a painless mouth ulcer that doesn't heal within 2-3 weeks.

Other signs are:

- Red velvety patches
- White patches
- Irregular bleeding
- Lumps or thickening of the lining inside your mouth
- Pain

## What are the risk factors?

No single cause has been found but closely linked factors are:

- Smoking
- Regularly consuming alcohol
- Chewing tobacco and betel nut
- Poor dentition and oral hygiene
- Immune deficiency disorders

If you smoke and consume large amounts of alcohol, this greatly increases the risk of developing cancer of the mouth.

## Can cancer of the mouth kill?

Cancer of the mouth kills approximately 1400 people every year.