What is oral cancer?
Cancer is a disease where cells in the body grow out of control.

Oral cancer is a disease where cancer cells form in the mouth, lips, cheeks, gums, tongue, hard palate, tonsils and the throat.

What can I do?
- **Avoid commercial tobacco**: Tobacco exposes the mouth to cancer-causing chemicals.
- **Limit alcohol use**: Alcohol can cause cancer by damaging DNA.
- **Get vaccinated against HPV**: HPV (human papillomavirus) can lead to oral cancer. HPV often has no symptoms. Vaccinating is essential.
- **Limit sun exposure**: Sun exposure can cause lip cancer. Use a lip balm with sunscreen to protect your lips from harmful sun exposure.
- **Maintain healthy weight and be active**: Poor diet and lack of exercise can make it easier to develop cancer.
An oral cancer screening can detect early signs of cancer.

Early detection is important. If found early, 75% of people survive. If found late, 20% survive.

During the screening, a dentist or hygienist will examine your face, neck, lips, tongue, mouth and the back of your throat for abnormalities.

The screening is quick, painless and is performed during your regular dental appointment.

If your dentist does not give an oral cancer screening at every visit, ask for one.