



ORAL PATHOLOGY



What is Oral Pathology?

An oral and maxillofacial surgeon is trained and experienced in properly diagnosing and surgically treating cancer of the head, neck and mouth. Most estimates suggest that an average of 42,000 Americans will be diagnosed each year with oral or pharyngeal cancer. Because oral cancer is often discovered late in its development, the mortality rate is particularly high. Mark Hardison, DDS, and Jeff Warden, DDS, MD are your best resources to detect and assess oral cancer during routine examinations or other procedures.

Early Detection

To help increase early detection, it is suggested that a self-exam is performed monthly by all individuals. To perform a self-examination, use a bright light and mirror and:

- Remove any dentures
- Feel inside the lips and front of gums
- Inspect the roof of the mouth
- Inspect the insides of the cheeks
- Inspect all surfaces of the tongue
- Feel for any enlarged lymph nodes or lumps on the interior of the mouth and on both sides of the neck and lower jaw

What to Look For

When performing a self examination, look for:

- Unusual white patches (leukoplakia), red patches (erythroplakia), or red and white patches (erythroleukoplakia) in the oral tissue
- Any sores that fail to heal in a timely manner
- Abnormal lumps in the tissues of the mouth
- A mass or lump in the neck
- Difficulty in chewing or swallowing
- Chronic or unusual sore throat

Early Treatment is Key

Should you discover something of concern during a self-examination, immediately call us at (615) 987-0857 for an appointment. If there are signs of cancer, early treatment can be a key to complete recovery.

