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Stress Awareness

Submitted by Shelly V. Durbin, MD

Everyone experiences stress. Stress is a response that helps your body adjust to unfamiliar situations. Stress can be useful for a short period of time; it can help you meet deadlines, study harder for a test and even can help you avoid dangerous situations. This is short-term and is the most common type of stress, often referred to as acute stress.

However, when stress starts overwhelming you and seems endless, it can have harmful effects on your health. This long-term stress, considered chronic stress, can be the result of a job pressures, extended illness, or death of a loved one, relationship issues, financial problems, traumatic events, and emotional problems.

A few of the physical signs of stress can include headache, tiredness, sleep issues, irritability, and upset stomach. However, when stress is not controlled, serious health conditions can occur. These include but are not limited to high blood pressure, weight gain or loss, heart issues such as arrhythmia, stomach issues such as IBS and ulcers, skin problems and depression.

What to do about stress

First and most importantly, talk to your doctor when you need help managing your stress. Your doctor can monitor your health symptoms, medications and suggest helpful resources.

Things to do to cope with stress:

- Exercise,
- Practice Meditation or Yoga,
- Get enough sleep,
- Eat a healthy diet and avoid drugs and alcohol,
- Talk to supportive people,
- Recognize your limitations and avoid situations that make you anxious,
- Make the tough decisions (job change, relationship change)

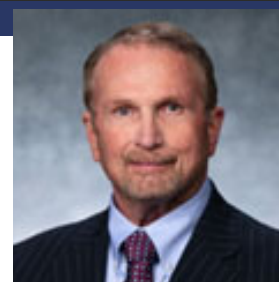


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Oral Cancer: Know the Signs

Submitted by Dr. J. Michael McCoy
Oral, Head and Neck Cancer



Dr. J. Michael McCoy is in practice with University Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeons, LLC and University Pathologist, PC. He graduated from West Virginia University College of Dentistry and was awarded the D.D.S. Degree in 1973. Dr. McCoy completed a residency at Medical University of South Carolina in Oral Pathology in 1977 and another at the University of Tennessee Graduate School of Medicine in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery in 1985. In addition, he completed post-graduate fellowships at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology/Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Oral Pathology and Otolaryngologic Pathology in 1977, was a Clinical Fellow in Head and Neck Oncology at Emory University Medical Center and Clinics in 1978 and did post-graduate work in Advanced Hyperbaric Medicine at Carraway Medical Center in Birmingham in 1985.

He is a professor in Departments of Pathology, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, and Radiology at the University Graduate School of Medicine.

According to the American Cancer Society, approximately 54,000 people in the United States will be diagnosed with oral cavity or oropharyngeal cancer this year and an estimated 10,850 people will die of these cancers. Dentists are often the first to detect oral cancer during checkups. However, any unusual changes in the mouth should be seen by an oral specialist such as an oral and maxillofacial surgeon or an otolaryngologist. Such expert examinations can allow the early diagnosis of an oral cancer which in turn often increases the likelihood of long-term survival.

Oral cancer sites include the tongue, tonsils, oropharynx, gums, roof of the mouth and lips. Although these cancers are twice as common in men as in women, they are equally common in both Black people and white people. Oral cancer is part of the larger category of head and neck cancers which includes the nose, nasal cavity, sinuses, larynx, and salivary glands.

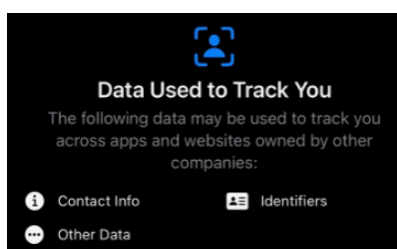
Smoking, chewing tobacco and alcohol use are still the major risk factors for oral cancer. Other causes include poor oral health, excessive sun exposure, a history of cancer and a weakened immune system. The average age of those diagnosed is 62. However, HPV virus-induced oral cancers are now becoming much more prevalent in young, healthy, non-smokers.

Know the Signs of Oral Cancer

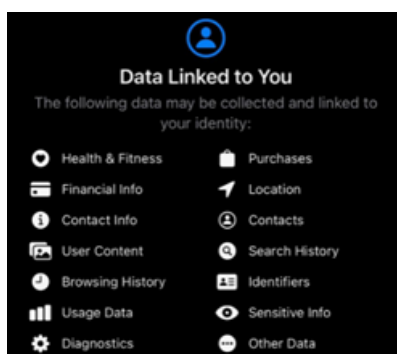
- mouth sores, or pain that doesn't go away
- white or red patches on the lips, gums, tonsils, or the lining of the mouth
- swelling, lumps or bumps in the mouth, throat, or neck
- difficulty swallowing or chewing
- feeling like something is caught in the throat
- trouble moving your jaw or tongue
- weight loss
- constant bad breath

References
healthline.com
cancer.org
oralcancerfoundation.org

Personal Privacy in the Digital World



Personal privacy is hard to define in the digital world. Your personal information is the new currency that allows us to use apps and services such as Gmail, Facebook, YouTube, and other “free” cashless services. Your information is collected from every website, app, streaming service, and device you use. This information can be used to provide you a better “customer experience” or show relevant-to-you advertising but this information can be used maliciously against you. Protect your digital footprint, this is the information you intentionally and unknowingly leave on the Internet.



You can take small measures to help protect your information. Consider these options: Limit what you share (posts, videos, and pictures) on Social Media websites and public forums. Do not trust their “privacy” settings with your information. Before creating an account on an app or website, check their terms to see what they do with your info. Before installing an app on your portable device, only use app stores like Google Play or Apple App Store. On Apple devices, you can check what information an app will collect and use before installing.

Use privacy-based search engines such as DuckDuckGo.com or StartPage.com instead of Google. On personal devices use Internet Browsers such as Brave or Firefox and protect your web traffic with the 1.1.1.1 App by Cloudflare. For personal email, consider using protonmail.com instead of Gmail, Hotmail, or Yahoo mail.

Privacy laws are getting better in the US but they are still weak compared to other countries. While you can't completely protect the information you leave on the internet, you can take steps to reduce it to protect yourself.