

World Cancer Day—United by Unique “*Strengthening Early Detection of Oral Cancer*”

Every year on **February 4**, the world comes together to observe **World Cancer Day**—a day not just to talk about cancer, but to **act, care, and commit**. Cancer affects millions of lives across the globe, yet many of those lives could be saved through **awareness, early detection, and equitable access to care**. On World Cancer Day, healthcare institutions reaffirm their commitment to **early cancer detection and equitable care**. Oral cancer, when diagnosed early, has a significantly higher survival rate and reduced treatment morbidity.

Routine oral screening should be an integral part of outpatient care, especially for high-risk individuals with tobacco and alcohol habits. Multidisciplinary collaboration among dentists, physicians, pathologists, and oncologists ensures timely diagnosis and effective management.

Why World Cancer Day Matters

Cancer is one of the leading causes of death worldwide, but it is **not always a death sentence**. Many cancers are preventable, and many more are treatable if detected early. Unfortunately, a large gap still exists between those who can access timely diagnosis and treatment and those who cannot. World Cancer Day reminds us that **where you live, who you are, or how much you earn should not decide your chances of survival**.

Understanding Cancer Beyond the Myths

Cancer is not caused by a single factor. Lifestyle habits such as tobacco use, unhealthy diet, lack of physical activity, excessive alcohol consumption, and prolonged sun exposure increase risk. Infections, genetic factors, and environmental exposures also play a role. Equally important is breaking myths—**cancer is not contagious**, and **early diagnosis saves lives**.

The Power of Early Detection

Early detection is one of the strongest weapons against cancer. Regular screenings for breast, cervical, oral, colorectal, and prostate cancers can help identify disease at a stage where treatment is more effective and less invasive. Simple habits like self-examination, routine health check-ups, and paying attention to warning signs can make a life-saving difference.

What Can We Do as Individuals?

- **Choose healthy habits:** Quit tobacco, eat balanced meals, stay physically active.
- **Get screened:** Encourage regular cancer screening for yourself and loved ones.
- **Spread awareness:** Share accurate information and dispel myths.
- **Support patients and survivors:** Emotional support is as important as medical care.
- **Advocate for equity:** Support initiatives that aim for affordable and accessible cancer care.

A Message of Hope

Behind every cancer statistic is a human story—of courage, resilience, and hope. Advances in research, technology, and treatment continue to improve survival and quality of life. Together, through awareness and action, we can reduce the burden of cancer and build a future where **no one faces cancer alone**. On this World Cancer Day, let us stand united—**to prevent what we can, treat what we must, and care for everyone equally**.

WORLD CANCER DAY – ORAL CANCER AWARENESS

What is Oral Cancer?

Oral cancer affects the lips, tongue, cheeks, floor of the mouth, and throat. It often begins as a small, painless lesion that is ignored until it becomes advanced.

Who Is at Risk?

- Tobacco (smoking & smokeless)
- Areca nut / gutkha / pan masala
- Alcohol consumption
- Poor oral hygiene
- Long-standing mouth lesions

Early Warning Signs

- ✓ Non-healing mouth ulcer
- ✓ White or red patch
- ✓ Burning sensation in mouth
- ✓ Reduced mouth opening
- ✓ Lump or thickening

⚠ If any sign lasts more than 2 weeks – consult a dentist or doctor immediately.

Why Early Detection Matters

- ✓ Easier treatment
- ✓ Better survival rate
- ✓ Less pain and disfigurement
- ✓ Lower treatment cost

Oral cancer is curable if detected early.

Prevention Starts With You

- ✓ Quit tobacco & areca nut
- ✓ Maintain oral hygiene
- ✓ Regular dental check-ups
- ✓ Spread awareness in family & community

Our Message

Look inside your mouth.

A small change today can save your life tomorrow.