

ORAL CANCER – PREVENTION AND AWARENESS

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Head and neck cancers including those of oral cavity constitute about 5% of all cancers. In general this is the sixth most common malignancy. About 5% to 8% show genetic transmission. In India the incidence is about 40% of all malignancies, most prevalent in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The commonest association is with tobacco use whether smoking or smokeless. Other common causative factors are alcohol intake, chewing of betel, betel nut and catechu. In addition to these there are some important causes viz. vitamin 'A' and iron deficiency disorders, immunocompromised conditions, some systemic diseases etc. Prevention can be very easily achieved by prohibition of tobacco use and alcohol abuse, treatment of local and general factors, a rigid management plan, and patients' awareness and compliance. It has been observed that oral cavity cancer is almost entirely preventable being caused by tobacco use.
