You should perform an oral cancer self-exam each month. Here’s how:

- Immediately after a dental exam, do a thorough self-exam to see what is “normal” for you.
- Feel your neck for any lumps.
- Examine your lips, cheeks, and gums.
- Use a flashlight to examine the top, sides, and underneath your tongue, the back of your throat and roof of your mouth.
- Be aware of changes in color, texture, or lumps.

HPV prevention is just one part of oral health.

You should also:

- Brush and floss regularly.
- See your dentist regularly for cleanings and exams.
- Avoid smoking or drinking alcohol.

Contact us at:
OICP@doh.wa.gov or www.doh.wa.gov/immunization

HPV-Related Cancer PREVENTION CHECKLIST

- See your dentist for your yearly oral cancer screening
- Get vaccinated against HPV
- Visit your doctor yearly
- Get regular Pap & HPV tests as recommended by your doctor

For people with disabilities, this document is available on request in other formats. To submit a request, please call 1-800-525-0127 (TDD/TTY call 711).
What is HPV?

- HPV (human papillomavirus) is a common virus spread by intimate skin-to-skin contact.
- In the USA, nearly 79 million people are infected with HPV, and eight out of ten people will have it in their lifetime.
- The majority of HPV infections have no symptoms and require no treatment.
- Some types of HPV cause warts on skin that look like flesh-colored bumps.

See your doctor if you have any of these symptoms of oral cancers:

- Persistent hoarseness or sore throat.
- Earaches or enlarged lymph nodes of the neck.
- Difficulty swallowing.
- Unexplained weight loss.

You can further reduce your oral cancer risk by avoiding alcohol and tobacco.

Cases of HPV-related cancers in men each year

- Oral: 14,814
- Anal: 2,197
- Penile: 1,269

Cases of HPV-related cancers in women each year

- Cervical: 11,866
- Anal: 4,333
- Vulvar: 3,934
- Vaginal: 833

The HPV Cancer Connection

Some types of HPV can infect parts of your body and cause cancer of the tongue, tonsils, throat, cervix, vulva, vagina, penis, and anus.

HPV Vaccine

Who should be vaccinated?

- Girls: age 9-26; Boys: age 9-21 (up to age 26 in some cases).
- Recommended at age 11-12.
- For most who are younger than 15 years, two shots are required. Three shots are required for age 15 and older.

Safe and effective

- Over 170 million doses of the HPV vaccine have been given and no serious safety concerns identified.
- The vaccine protects against the majority of cervical and anal cancers, and up to 90% of genital warts.
- Research suggests that oral cancers can be prevented with vaccination.

Behavior changes

- Scientific studies have shown that HPV vaccine does not change sexual behavior or onset of first sexual experience.

Insurance

- Like other childhood vaccines in Washington, the HPV vaccine is universally covered through age 18 regardless of insurance status.

Source: CDC: USCS Data Brief: No. 4, Aug 2018