

Shedding Light on Oral Cancer

New Dental Technology Seeks Out Disease

Dyer, Indiana ([PRWEB](#)) January 21, 2009 -- Oral cancer will strike 30,000 Americans this year. A third of them will die. Oral Cancer is now the sixth most commonly diagnosed form of cancer in the United States and one of the few cancers with a survival rate that has not improved in the last 50 years. Until now, there was no effective way to detect oral cancer in its earliest stages.

VELscope, a new technology used by Dr. Ivan Atcha at The Center for Implants, Sedation and Cosmetic Dentistry in Dyer, IN is allowing dentists to detect the disease early and aid in survival rates.

"It's a deadly disease," says Dr. Atcha. "Early detection with the VELscope is one way to fight it."

Oral cancer appears as small sores in the mouth, usually about an inch long. At this stage, the cancer has not spread to the lymph nodes and is highly treatable. There's only one problem- it's not very noticeable. People might think the sores are just a benign canker sore. When detected at this stage, patients have an 80 percent survival rate.

The cancer becomes even more dangerous when the tumor metastasizes and spreads to the lymph nodes. At this stage, treatment is much less effective and only one in five will live.

The new VELscope technology is designed to discover oral cancer in its earliest stage. Using a narrow band of safe, high-energy blue light and a specialized filter to allow dentists to investigate areas of oral concern, this new advancement is revolutionizing early detection of oral cancer. Taking just two minutes, VELscope's blue light allows for a more thorough evaluation of trouble spots than white light can reveal. This technology can also detect abnormal growths before they become cancerous.

NEW RISKS

Risk factors in developing oral cancer include tobacco use, frequent and/or excessive alcohol consumption, a compromised immune system and a past history of cancer. Researchers also point to the HPV virus to explain why oral cancer rates are rising among those who don't drink or use tobacco. However, anyone can be a risk for oral cancer as 25 percent of all newly diagnosed cases have been in patients under the age of 40 with none of the known risk factors.

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