



Connecticut State Dental Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 21, 2010

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CSDA RECOGNIZES NATIONAL CANCER MONTH, HIGHLIGHTS DANGERS OF ORAL CANCER

HARTFORD – As part of National Cancer Month in the U.S., the [Connecticut State Dental Association](http://www.CSDA.com) (CSDA) and its members are stressing the dangers oral cancer poses to millions of Americans, highlighting the importance of preventative care, and instructing Connecticut residents on how to talk to their dentists about screenings.

Nearly 35,000 Americans will be diagnosed with oral cancer this year, and twenty-five percent of them will die from the disease. It's a scary thought – but for all the attention Americans have paid to health care in the past year, the seriousness of oral health has largely been left out of the discussion. According to the American Cancer Society, oral cancer occurs almost as frequently as leukemia and claims more lives than melanoma or cervical cancer. Early detection is critical to increasing oral cancer survival rates. When detected late, oral cancer survival rates over a five-year period is about 50 percent. Risk factors include smoking, alcohol consumption, tobacco dipping and exposure to the human papillomavirus.

“Oral Cancer often starts as a small white or red spot or sore that can occur anywhere in the mouth,” said Elie Ferneini, DMD, MD. “Although most of these small spots are harmless, some are not. This is why dentists have been trained to identify these early signs. Additionally, dentists have the skills and tools to ensure that early signs of cancer and pre-cancerous conditions are diagnosed and followed appropriately.”

“Dentists serve as the first line of defense against this extremely serious disease – it's critical that Connecticut residents speak with their dentists about regular screenings,” said Dr. Bruce Tandy, President of CSDA. “An oral cancer screening is a quick and painless examination of the mouth and throat and, with new modalities of diagnosis, should be a part of every persons overall health awareness and maintenance.”

About Connecticut State Dental Association

The Connecticut State Dental Association (CSDA) has 2,700 members including dentists, dental hygienists and dental assistants. As the trusted leader and voice for oral health care in CT, the CSDA has advocated for the public's health and promoted the art and science of dentistry since 1864. For more information about the CSDA, visit the Association's Web site at www.csda.com.

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