



## Connecticut State Dental Association

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **CT STATE DENTAL ASSOCIATION UNDERSCORES THE IMPORTANCE OF ORAL CANCER SCREENINGS**

*April is National Cancer Control Month*

HARTFORD – The [Connecticut State Dental Association](http://www.CSDA.com) (CSDA) and its members are highlighting the necessity of regular preventative care and oral cancer screenings as the U.S. enters National Cancer Control Month this April. Dentists throughout Connecticut, and across the country, are discussing the key role they can play in early detection and the ways in which patients can help protect themselves in the fight against cancers of the mouth.

“Oral cancer can present as small red or white spots in the throat, mouth or on the tongue. Sometimes they are benign and sometimes they aren’t,” said Dr. Jon Davis, CSDA President. “Dentists are uniquely positioned, through regular dental care visits, to identify what may be a problem early on and direct a patient quickly for further care.”

A recent study published in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology* found that there has been a marked increase in the occurrence of oral cavity squamous cell carcinoma in white people ages 18 to 44 by 28%. The incidence of this type of cancer in young white women increased 111% between 1975 and 2007. Researchers are unable to determine if this is related to the human papillomavirus (HPV), but recommend that dentists be on the lookout in their practices when they conduct regular dental care screenings for this population of patients.

In fact, according to the National Cancer Institute, more than 36,000 people were diagnosed with various types of oral cancer in 2010, resulting in the loss of 7,880 lives. The best deterrent to these statistics is early detection. When caught early enough, survival rates can be 75-percent. If caught too late, a patient with oral cancer has a survival rate after 5 years of about 20-percent. In addition to the HPV virus, risk factors include smoking, chewing tobacco and alcohol consumption.

Patients are encouraged to reduce their risk factors and schedule regular checkups with their dentist.

“Oral cancer screenings are painless procedures but the results can save your life,” said Dr. Davis.

**About Connecticut State Dental Association**

The Connecticut State Dental Association (CSDA) has 2,670 members including dentists, dental hygienists and dental assistants. As the trusted leader and voice for oral health care in Connecticut, 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](http://www.csda.com).

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