



Connecticut State Dental Association

835 West Queen Street
Southington, CT 06489

860.378.1800/phone
860.378.1807/fax

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 26, 2011

CONTACT: Randi Sussman
860.378.1800
RSussman@csda.com

CONNECTICUT'S FAILING GRADE IN TOBACCO CONCERNS LOCAL DENTISTS

Hartford, CT- Connecticut dentists, today, expressed their concern about tobacco use in the state, prompted by a new report from the American Lung Association, which issued the state of Connecticut an "F" in its efforts to help low-income residents quit smoking.

"The fact that the state received a failing grade in helping people to quit using tobacco products is of great concern," said Dr. Jon Davis, President of the [Connecticut State Dental Association](http://www.csda.com) (CSDA). "As dentists, we've seen how smoking and tobacco products can be harmful to a person's oral health. That's why the CSDA is committed to educating the public about the dangers of tobacco use and the importance of early detection in diagnosing and treating oral cancer."

Connecticut dentists want to remind patients that good oral health is critical to a person's overall physical well-being. According to the [American Dental Association](http://www.ada.org), the effects of smoking and smokeless tobacco products can lead to oral cancer. Oral cancer, often first noticed by dentists, starts out as tiny, unnoticed white or red spots or sores anywhere in the mouth and can grow over time. Oral cancer can affect any part of the mouth including the tongue, lips, gum tissue and both the hard and soft pallet.

An estimated 34,360 Americans are diagnosed with oral cancer each year. An estimated 7,550 people (5,180 men and 2,370 women) died of these cancers in 2007. The incidence of oral cancer in Connecticut is on par with national levels – those at low income levels are especially vulnerable. (http://www.ct.gov/dph/lib/dph/oral_health/pdf/factsheets0901.pdf).

The best way to prevent oral cancer is to avoid tobacco use and see a dentist for regular check-ups which includes a full examination of the entire mouth. This is essential in the early detection of cancerous and pre-cancerous conditions.

"Knowing the facts and seeing your dentist regularly for screenings are important steps in preventing oral cancer," said Carolyn Malon, Vice President of the CSDA and a practicing dentist from Farmington. "When our patients learn the facts about tobacco use, and have access

to tools to help them quit, their oral and overall health improves dramatically.” She also stressed that smokeless tobacco products such as chew are not a healthier means of using tobacco.

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.

###