7. FLOOR AND ROOF OF MOUTH

Tilt your head back and open your mouth. Then lift your tongue up and look at the floor of the mouth. Observing changes in colour, ulcers or swellings.

1. FACE

Look for swellings you have not noticed before and inspect your skin. Turn your head from side to side, stretching the skin over the muscles making lumps easier to see.

2. NECK

Run your fingers under your jaw and feel either side of your neck. Are there any swellings?

3. LIPS

Pull your upper lip upwards and bottom lip downwards. Look inside for any sores or changes in colour.

4. GUMS

Examine your gums, feeling around the gum for anything unusual.

5. CHEEKS

Open your mouth and pull your cheek away one side at a time. Look for any red or white patches. Check for ulcers, lumps or tenderness.

6. TONGUE

Gently pull out your tongue and examine one side then the other. Look for swellings, ulcers or changes in colour. Examine the underside of your tongue.

The Mouth Cancer Foundation is a charity dedicated to raising awareness of mouth cancer and to helping and supporting those suffering from or at risk of mouth, throat and other head and neck cancers, as well as providing assistance and information on living with mouth cancer for families, friends and carers.

Mouth Cancer Foundation

www.mouthcancerfoundation.org

Advice Line: 01924 950 950 • Head Office +44 (0) 208 940 5680
Alternatively you can email info@mouthcancerfoundation.org

To make a donation or for FREE information visit www.mouthcancerfoundation.org

EARLY DETECTION IS KEY!

All you need is a mirror, a good light source and clean fingers.
Are you checking for Mouth Cancer?

Oral Hygiene is important at every age, but as 78% of mouth cancer cases occur in the over 55 age group, it is imperative that care home residents look after their mouths and Carers check their oral cavities on a regular basis looking for signs and symptoms of mouth cancer.

57.9% of patients in residential homes and 42% in care homes are living with Dementia so extra care will need to be taken when carrying out examinations. It is important to observe a resident and notice any behavioural changes and listen to what they may be telling you as even the smallest detail can be an important sign.

How to spot Changes in the Mouth

What Care Staff Need to Know

Care staff need to know how and when to assess the oral health of a resident and when to report changes. All residents should have an oral health assessment when they move into a care home with the result recorded in their care plan. This involves discussions with family or friends involved in ongoing care. This will help keep on top of any changes in habits.

Thorough and regular assessments can help prevent pain, disturbed sleep and health problems that poor oral health can cause.

CARERS SHOULD KNOW THAT INTRA-ORAL ASSESSMENTS FOR SOME PATIENTS WILL BE CHALLENGING

How the resident usually manages their daily mouth care (for example, toothbrushing and type of toothbrush, removing and caring for dentures including partial dentures). Check whether they need support.

If they have dentures, including partial dentures, whether they are marked or unmarked. If unmarked, ask whether they would like to arrange for marking and offer to help.

The name and address of their dentist or any dental service they have had contact with, and where and how long ago they saw a dentist or received dental treatment. Record if there has been no contact or they do not have a dental, and help them find one.

Staff also need to understand how dental pain or a mouth infection can affect residents’ general health, wellbeing and behaviour. Make sure staff know who to ask for advice, how and when to report any concerns about a resident’s oral health, and how changes in a person’s condition might affect their ability to manage their mouth care.

Support residents in their daily mouth care routines by:

Brush their natural teeth at least twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.

Use the resident’s choice of toothbrush, either manual or electric and mouth care products.

Clean dentures, brushing and removing food debris, removing dentures overnight.

Support residents in their daily mouth care routines by:

Use their choice of cleaning products for dentures.

It is important to ensure the care home has a documented referral pathway so carers can report any concerns and refer to the dental and hospital consultants as soon as possible.

Risk Factors

- Tobacco use is the main cause of mouth cancer.
- Drinking alcohol to excess can increase risks four fold.
- Drinking and smoking together can make mouth cancer up to 30 times more likely to develop.
- Poor diet and social deprivation is linked to a third of all cancer cases.
- Drinking and smoking together can make mouth cancer up to 30 times more likely to develop.
- The Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), transmitted through oral sex, could overtake tobacco and alcohol as the main risk factor within the next decade.
- Exposure to the sun is a cause of skin cancer which can affect the lips and face.

Facts About Mouth Cancer

1 person every 3 HOURS is lost to Mouth Cancer

Over 8700 new cases in the UK each year

Each year 2700 people die from Mouth Cancer

Worldwide Mouth Cancer affects 650,000 per year

Mouth Cancer is TWICE as common in men

Over HALF of older adults who live in care homes have tooth decay

Incidence has risen by 49% over the past 10 years

5 year SURVIVAL rate has hardly improved in last few decades

www.mouthcancerfoundation.org