

Head and Neck Cancer Self-Check

THE 2 MINUTE DO-IT-YOURSELF CHECK THAT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE!



ORACLE
Head & Neck Cancer UK

Examine yourself once a month using the guide below. All you need is a mirror, a good light source and clean fingers! Follow the step by step guide.

At each step you are looking for anything out of the ordinary – especially any lumps, red or white patches, changes in colour/texture or lingering ulcers. If you have any unusual symptoms that last longer than 3 weeks, contact your dentist or doctor so they can examine you.



1 FACE

Look at the whole face – are there any swellings you haven't noticed before? **Inspect your skin** – has anything changed recently? Have moles become larger or started to itch or bleed? **Turn your head from side to side** – this stretches the skin over the muscles making lumps easier to see.

2 NECK

Run your fingers under your jaw and feel along the large muscle either side of your neck. Are there any unusual swellings, such as a hard, painless lump on the side of the neck? Does everything feel the same on both sides?

3 THROAT

Have there been any recent **changes in your throat** that have **lasted longer than three weeks**? Has your throat been **sore** or have there

been **changes in your voice**? Has there been a **cough** or **pain in swallowing**?

4 LIPS

Use your fingers and thumb to feel the inside of your mouth. Pull your upper lip upwards and bottom lip downwards. Look inside for any sores or changes in colour.

5 GUMS

Use your thumb and forefinger. Examine your gums feeling around the gum for anything unusual.

6 CHEEKS

Open your mouth and pull your cheeks away, one side at a time, with your finger. Look for any red or white patches. Does everything feel the same on both sides? Use your finger in the cheek to check for ulcers, lumps or tenderness. Repeat on the other side. Your tongue can

be helpful to locate sore areas, ulcers or rough patches.

7 TONGUE

Gently stick out your tongue and look at one side first and then the other. Look for any swelling, ulcers or change in colour. Examine the underside of your tongue by lifting the tip of your tongue to the roof of your mouth.

8 FLOOR AND ROOF OF MOUTH

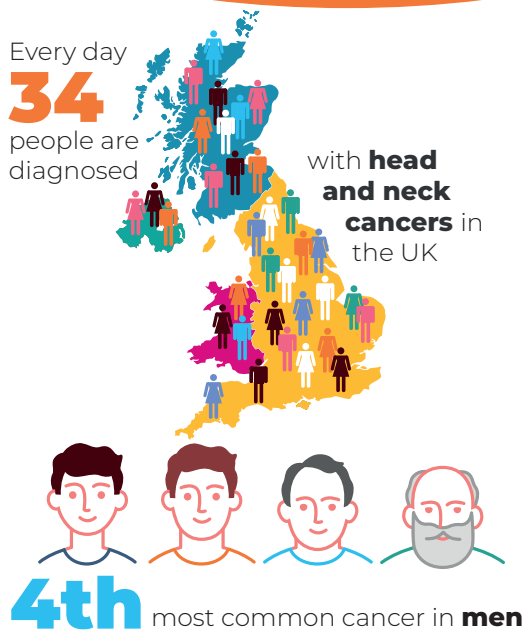
Tilt back your head and open your mouth wide to inspect the roof of your mouth. Look to see if there are changes in colour or ulcers. Check for changes in texture with your finger. Lift your tongue up and look underneath at the floor of your mouth. Look for any colour changes that are unusual. Gently press your finger along the floor of your mouth and under your tongue. Feel for any lumps, swellings or ulcers.

Head and Neck Cancer Self-Check

#headneckcheck

The number of people with head and neck cancer is **expected to increase by 30% over the next 10 years**, so it is really important to do what we can to **reduce our risk** of these cancers and to **detect them as early as possible** when they do happen.

Are you checking for **HEAD AND NECK CANCER** once a month?



Only **one-third** of head and neck cancers are **diagnosed early**, resulting in **poor survival** and **outcomes** for those **diagnosed later**

7th most common cancer **overall**

The most common places for head and neck cancers include:

- mouth
- throat
- voice box
- salivary glands
- nose and sinuses
- thyroid

The Top 4 Risk Factors

Head and neck cancers don't discriminate; anyone can get it so it is important that you do everything you can to reduce your risk. These are the top 4 risk factors to be aware of.

1 TOBACCO USE

Any use of tobacco (smoking, chewing tobacco/pan, cigars, snuff etc) create a **higher risk of getting head and neck cancers**. It is extra important to **be aware of key symptoms**.

2 ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

Frequent and heavy alcohol consumption raises the risk of developing head and neck cancers.

3 HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS (HPV)

HPV is the cause of cervical cancer and is also a **leading cause** of throat and mouth cancers. Getting the **HPV vaccine is the best way to prevent** these cancers from developing. There is a **free HPV vaccination programme** in the UK available to 12 to 13 year-olds and a **catch up programme** for those up to 25 years old. Check with your doctor for eligibility.

4 POOR ORAL CARE

Poor care of the mouth and teeth **increases the risk** of a number of diseases and can also **hide key symptoms of head and neck cancers**.

If you want to know more about the **signs and symptoms** and **how to check yourself** please visit

headneckcheck.com



ORACLE
Head & Neck Cancer UK

We are the leading charity in the UK that focuses on Head and Neck cancer. We do this by focusing on the RACE to overcome the crisis in Head and Neck cancers in the UK. Research, Awareness, Collaboration and Patient Experience.

oraclehnc@org.uk | info@oraclehnc.org.uk

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