

Signs and Symptoms of Mouth Cancer

These are things to look out for:

- Ulcers that do not heal within 3 weeks
- Pain or discomfort in the mouth
- Lumps and swellings of no obvious cause in the mouth or neck
- Bleeding from the mouth or throat
- Red or white patches inside the mouth
- Changes in texture; hardness, roughness
- Teeth that become loose
- Difficulty or pain with swallowing, chewing or moving the jaw
- Persistent hoarseness or changes to the voice
- Persistent coughing or the feeling that something is 'stuck' in the throat
- Numbness or tingling of the lips or tongue
- Unexplained weight loss
- Dentures that suddenly stop fitting properly

That's quite a list but remember the mouth is prone to all sorts of damage. We bite ourselves, burn ourselves with hot food and drink and damage the inside of our mouths with spicy foods or scrape it with hard things. Bleeding gums and loose teeth are commonly caused by gum disease. Many people are prone to mouth ulcers (never lasting more than 3 weeks).

Skin conditions like lichen planus can cause ulceration, changes to texture and white patches and infection with thrush and other microorganisms are common. Most dentures become loose simply because they are old. Pain in the mouth is often due to toothache or abscesses.

The chances of the signs and symptoms above being due to cancer are low but we all know our own bodies best so if you have ANY SUSPICION THAT SOMETHING MAY BE WRONG contact your dentist or doctor IMMEDIATELY.

For more expert advice on looking after your teeth please visit our website.

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