

# ORAL, HEAD & NECK SELF EXAM GUIDE!

Check your mouth and neck each month.  
Talk to your dentist or doctor if you notice a lump or have any other changes that last over 2 weeks.



Use a mirror or flashlight to look at your cheeks, tongue, gums, back of the throat, and the roof of your mouth.



Feel for lumps behind your ears and down to your neck on both sides.



Feel along your neck all the way down to your collarbone.



Lift your chin and feel upward to check underneath your jaw.



## PREVENT CANCER CHECKLIST

- Get Vaccinated!
- See your doctor and dentist regularly
- Check your mouth each month for any changes
- Stop smoking & limit drinking
- Talk to your doctor about cervical cancer screening

For more information on HPV, visit:

[cdc.gov/hpv](http://cdc.gov/hpv)  
[mahpvcoalition.org](http://mahpvcoalition.org)  
[teammaureen.org](http://teammaureen.org)



Adapted with permission from the Massachusetts HPV Coalition and Team Maureen. Visit [mahpvcoalition.org](http://mahpvcoalition.org) for more information.

## PREVENTING CANCER *at the Dentist!*



### Stop Cancer Before it Starts

Talk to your dentist about the HPV vaccine today.





## WHAT IS HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS (HPV)?

Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) is a very common virus that spreads from skin-to-skin contact. Almost everyone will have HPV at some point in their life. HPV usually has no symptoms, so most people with HPV don't know they have it. Most cases of HPV go away on their own, but other cases can go on to cause cancer.

HPV can cause several types of cancer, including cervical and oropharyngeal cancer. While cervical cancer impacts women or people with a cervix, over 80% of oropharyngeal cancer cases are in men.

The oropharynx is the back of the tongue and throat. Symptoms of oropharyngeal cancer include:

- Hoarseness or change of voice
- Sore throat that won't go away
- Earaches
- Swelling or lump in the neck
- Pain or difficulty swallowing
- Unexpected weight loss
- Sores or bumps in the mouth that last over 2 weeks



*The oropharynx is the area in blue at the back of the tongue and throat.*

## THE CANCER-PREVENTING VACCINE

The HPV vaccine provides protection from the most cancer-causing types of HPV. It is recommended for everyone between the ages of 9 to 26.

The best time to get the HPV vaccine is between ages 9 and 12. This is because children have a stronger immune response.

The vaccine is given in 2 or 3 doses over several months. Children age 14 or younger need 2 shots. After age 14, an extra catch-up shot is needed to be fully protected.

The HPV vaccine is very safe. Over 120 million doses of the HPV vaccine have been given since 2006. Like any other vaccine, the most common side effect is soreness at the injection site. Talk to your doctor if you have any severe allergies.



The HPV vaccine is for everyone.