



IHS DIVISION OF ORAL HEALTH

— NATIONAL —
**ORAL
CANCER
AWAWARENESS
MONTH**
— APRIL —

PRODUCED BY THE DEFENSE HEALTH AGENCY

Facts About Oropharyngeal Cancer

- **54,000** new cases per year in the U.S.
- **1** person every hour, every day will die from oral cancer
- It has an **80-90%** survival rate when caught early
- The 5-year survival rate is **57%** due to late stage diagnosis
- Worldwide, there are **657,000** new cases each year and 330,000 deaths
- Oral cancer most often occurs in people aged 55-64 and affects more than twice as many men as women

Oral Cancer Foundation - <https://oralcancerfoundation.org/events/oral-head-neck-cancer-awareness-month/>



Risk Factors

- Any form of tobacco use
- Alcohol consumption (**30x** increased risk if alcohol + tobacco)
- HPV infection of the mouth and throat
- Age
- Sun exposure (lip)

American Cancer Society - <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/annual-cancer-facts-and-figures/2023/2023-cancer-facts-and-figures.pdf>



Signs & Symptoms

- Sore in the throat or mouth that bleeds easily and does not heal
- Persistent red or white patch in the mouth
- Lump or thickening in the throat or mouth
- Ear pain
- Neck mass
- Coughing up blood

American Cancer Society - <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/annual-cancer-facts-and-figures/2023/2023-cancer-facts-and-figures.pdf>



Human Papillomavirus (HPV)

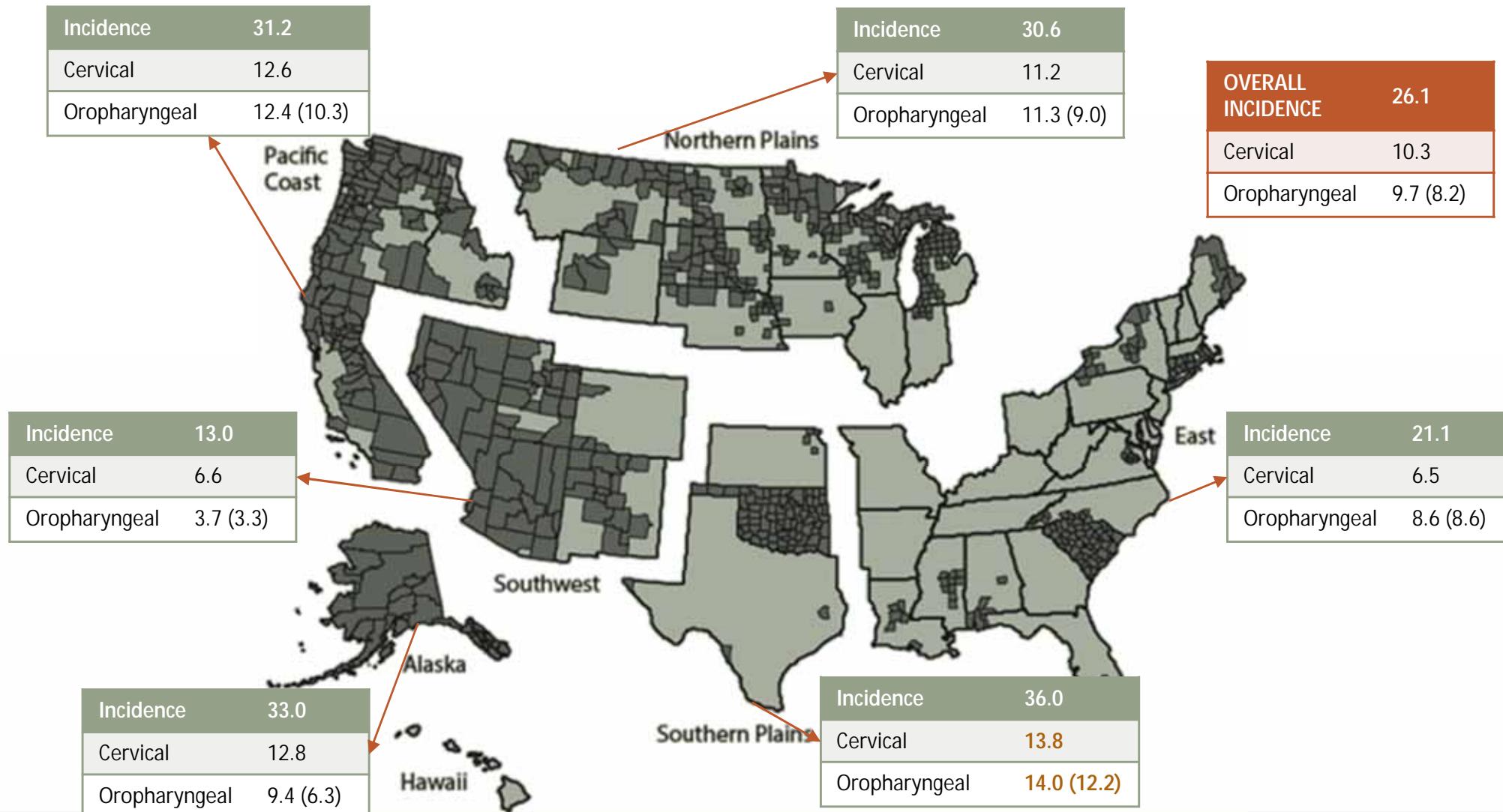
- 80 million people are infected with HPV in the U.S.
- 40% of HPV-attributed cancers are oropharyngeal
- HPV accounts for 70% of oropharyngeal cancers in the U.S.

Cancer	Annual Cases
Oropharyngeal	14,800 (12,500 in men)
Cervical	11,100
Anus	6,900
Vulva	2,900
Penis	900
Vagina	700
Total	37,300

CDC Division of Oral Health - <https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/fast-facts/oral-cancer-and-hpv-vaccine/index.html>



HPV Cancers in AI/AN Populations



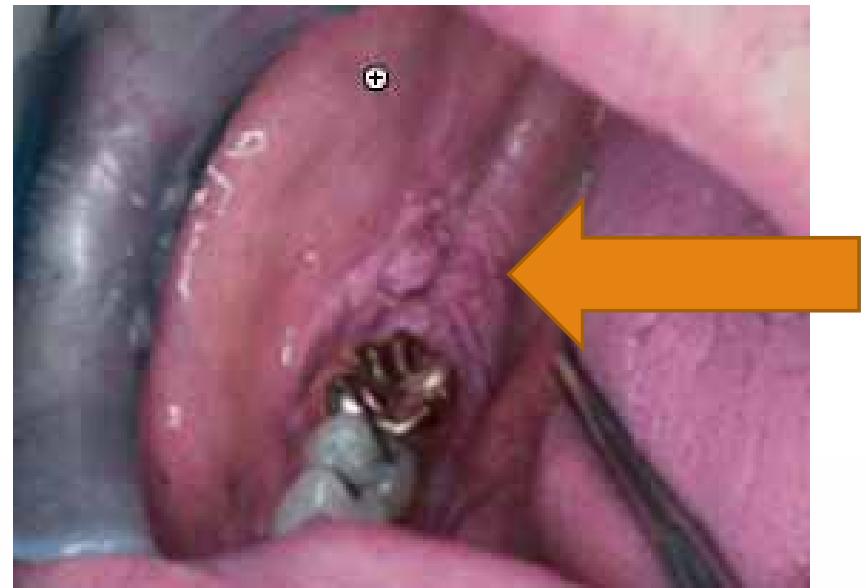
Melkonian SC, Henley SJ, Senkomago V, et al. Cancers Associated with Human Papillomavirus in American Indian and Alaska Native Populations — United States, 2013–2017. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2020;69:1283–1287.
 DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6937a2>

Examples



The right lateral tongue of this patient demonstrated the presence of an indurated, painless ulcer of unknown duration.

Dx: Early-stage squamous cell carcinoma



A 68 year old female presented with a slightly white nodular alteration of the retromolar region.

Dx: Squamous cell carcinoma

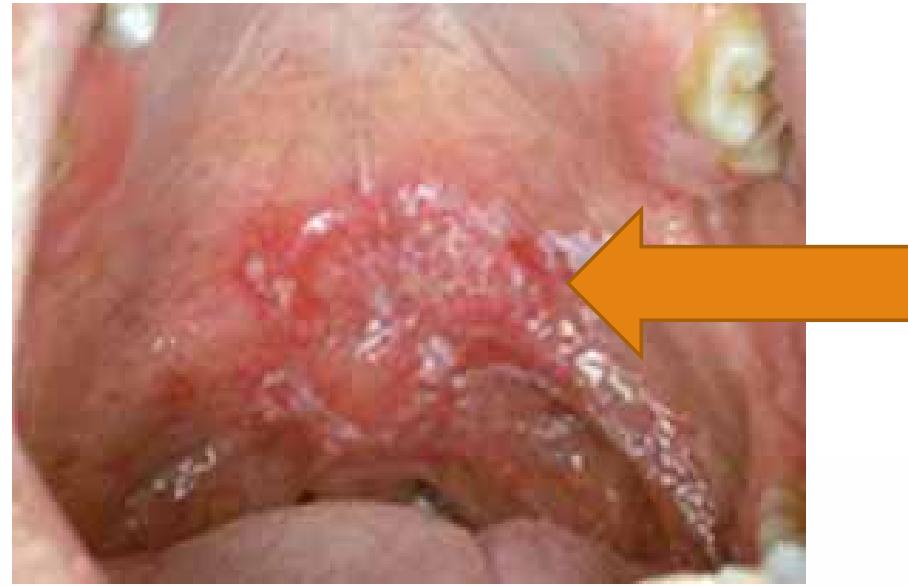
Oral Cancer Foundation - <https://oralcancerfoundation.org/dental/oral-cancer-images/>

Examples



In this patient, the anterior floor of the mouth, bilateral to the midline, demonstrated a vaguely marginated lesion, which was firm on palpation.

Dx: Marginally invasive squamous cell carcinoma



Red and white surface alteration which is centrally indurated/firm was noted on routine examination in this 70-year-old male. The patient has a long time history of tobacco and alcohol abuse.

Dx: Squamous cell carcinoma

Oral Cancer Foundation - <https://oralcancerfoundation.org/dental/oral-cancer-images/>

HPV Vaccination

- HPV vaccination can prevent more than **90%** of cancers caused by HPV
- About 85% of people will get an HPV infection in their lifetime. Vaccinating all 11–12-year-olds can protect them long before they are ever exposed.
- CDC recommends two doses of HPV vaccine for all adolescents at age 11 or 12 years.

Routine vaccination	Age 11–12 years; can be started at age 9 years
Catch-up Vaccination*	Age 13–26 years, if not adequately vaccinated
Shared clinical decision-making*	Some adults age 27–45 years, if not adequately vaccinated

CDC - <https://www.cdc.gov/hpv/hcp/schedules-recommendations.html>



What can we do?

- Recognize risk factors for oral cancer and spread awareness to patients and colleagues
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/hpv/hcp/educational-materials.html>
- Screen patients for oral cancer:
 - <https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2020-09/oral-cancer-exam.pdf>
- Talk to parents/caregivers about HPV vaccinations
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/hpv/hcp/answering-questions.html>
- Refer patients to dental providers for follow-up oral cancer screenings

