

# Franklin House Dental Practice

## information sheet for patients oral cancer

### What is it?

Mouth cancer is a dangerous abnormal growth that can affect any part of the mouth.

### What to look for?

Mouth cancer can appear as:

- An, often painless, ulcer that fails to clear up after about two weeks
- A growth or swelling which has been present for more than about two weeks
- Sometimes as a white or red patch in the mouth.
- Most things like this will not turn out to be cancer: but if you have these signs they must be investigated by a dentist immediately.

### Who is at risk?

- If you use tobacco (smoked or chewed) and drink too much alcohol. If you do both, you increase your chances of getting cancer.
- Prolonged exposure to sunlight increases risk of lip and skin cancer.
- Aged over 40 years and over but younger people can get it too.
- People who don't eat a healthy diet.
- People who have a chronic infection such as candidiasis or syphilis

### What can be done?

- Follow the advice in the "Who is at risk" section.
- See your dentist at regular intervals as he can detect it early and then the chances of a cure are good. He may monitor you or send you to see a specialist.
- Keep your alcohol intake to below 14 units for women and 21 units for men (a unit is roughly equal to a single measure of spirit, a half pint of beer or a small glass of wine)
- Eat five portions of fruit and vegetables every day.

Once a suspicious lesion has been identified your dentist will refer you to a specialist for investigation. In today's world there are many treatment options from excision (removal) of the tumour, cryotherapy (freezing it off) radiotherapy or chemotherapy. Any treatment, if needed will be specifically tailored to your needs.

We go the extra mile, to make you smile