

# CIGNA Dental Covers Brush Biopsy



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many choices.

## ***More benefits, more choice and more satisfaction***

### ***Early Detection and Proper Treatment Can Cure Oral Cancers***

At CIGNA Dental, we share in the national concern for the early detection of oral cancer and stress the importance of preventive dentistry and early intervention in the disease management process.

Therefore, we are pleased to inform you that effective January 1, 2006, CIGNA Dental will cover brush biopsy for members who are enrolled in the CIGNA Dental Care (\*DHMO), CIGNA Dental PPO (DPPO), or CIGNA Traditional (Dental Indemnity) plan.

There are two procedure codes for each brush biopsy :

D7288 – in-office diagnostic procedure  
D0473 – laboratory analysis/pathology report

#### **DHMO Members:**

For existing members enrolled in a DHMO plan, the co-payment for the in-office diagnostic procedure is \$60. The co-payment for the laboratory analysis/pathology report is \$0.

#### **DPPO/Dental Indemnity Members:**

For existing members enrolled in a DPPO or Dental Indemnity plan, the coinsurance levels for the in-office diagnostic procedure will be under Class II benefits, subject to maximums and deductibles. The laboratory analysis/pathology report is covered as a Class I expense.

### ***Symptoms of Oral Cancer and Signs to Look For:<sup>1,2</sup>***

- Patches inside the mouth or on the lips that are white, a mixture of red and white, or red
- Patches that are white are the most common and sometimes become malignant
- Sore on the lip or in the mouth that won't heal
- Lump in the neck
- Earache
- Pain, tenderness, or numbness anywhere in the mouth or on the lips
- Difficulty chewing, swallowing, speaking or moving the jaw or tongue

### ***Who is at Risk?***

Oral cancer is the sixth deadliest cancer in America. Despite advances in surgical techniques, radiation treatments and chemotherapy, survival rates remain low when compared to other cancers.<sup>2</sup>

Annually, approximately 28,000 Americans are diagnosed with oral cancer.<sup>1</sup>

While oral cancer most often occurs in those who use tobacco in any form, we also know that alcohol use combined with smoking greatly increases risk. But more than 25% of oral cancers occur in people who do not smoke and have no other risk factors.<sup>1</sup>

**Today, it's easier than ever to detect oral cancer.**

#### *What is Brush Biopsy?*

Brush biopsy is a painless procedure which is used to gather [unusual] cells in mouth. The dentist uses a small brush to take a tissue specimen, which is then sent to a laboratory for analysis to determine the presence of pre-cancerous or cancerous cells.<sup>1</sup>

The procedure is non-invasive and does not require surgery or anesthesia.



<sup>1</sup> [www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org),  
October 2005

<sup>2</sup> National Cancer  
Institute,  
[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov),  
October 2005

<sup>3</sup> [www.oralcancer  
foundation.org](http://www.oralcancerfoundation.org)



# YOU and YOUR Dentist – Oral Cancer Detection



## Regular Check-ups Include Painless Oral Cancer exams

Your regular checkup is a good time for your dentist to check your entire mouth for signs of cancer. While most dentists already perform this assessment, we encourage you to ask your dentist to perform a visual assessment for oral cancer as part of their routine dental exam.

In about 10% of patients, the dentist may notice a flat, painless, white or red spot or a small sore. Although most of these are harmless, some are not. Harmful oral spots or sores often look identical to those that are harmless - testing can tell them apart.<sup>1</sup>

Since certain lifestyle choices may increase risk for oral cancer, we also encourage you to discuss behaviors that may have an impact on your oral and overall health.

To ensure that a spot or sore is not dangerous, your dentist may recommend a simple test, such as a brush biopsy, which can detect potentially dangerous cells when the disease is still at an early stage. Results may help determine the need for a surgical biopsy or other follow-up. The brush biopsy is approved for use in the United States.<sup>1</sup>

An oral cancer exam is totally painless. Basically, it is a visual assessment of all the tissues in and around your mouth. Your dentist will examine the roof of your mouth, the insides of your cheeks, and the underside of your tongue. This simple screening is a vital step in protecting your oral and overall health.

### Oral Cancer Facts<sup>1,2,3</sup>

- Approximately 28,000 new diagnoses of oral cancer occur each year in the United States.
- More than 8,000 deaths from oral cancer annually
- When detected late, oral cancer five-year survival rate is about 50%
- Oral Cancer is more likely to strike after age 40

## Early Detection is the Key!

Remember to ask your dentist to perform an oral cancer evaluation during your next visit as well as every time you return for your regular dental check ups.

“Dental HMO” is used to refer to product designs that may differ by state of residence of enrollee, including but not limited to, prepaid plans, managed care plans, and plans with open access features.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org),  
October 2005

<sup>2</sup> National Cancer Institute,  
[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov),  
October 2005

<sup>3</sup> [www.oralcancer  
foundation.org](http://www.oralcancerfoundation.org)

