

## How serious is oral cancer?

*Here are the facts:*

- Each year, oral cancer claims as many lives as skin cancer and more than cervical cancer.
- About 8,000 Americans die from oral cancer every year.
- Annually, 30,000 Americans are diagnosed with oral cancer.
- About 25 percent of the people diagnosed with oral cancer have no risk factors at all.
- Risk factors include smoking, chewing tobacco, and drinking alcohol.
- The five-year survival rate for oral cancer hasn't improved in 40 years. It remains a dismal 57 percent because it is often detected very late.
- If it is detected early, the survival rate goes up dramatically—to 81 percent.
- If it is found and treated at the precancerous stage, oral cancer can be prevented.

Delta Dental of Indiana:

[www.deltadentalin.com](http://www.deltadentalin.com)

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[www.deltadentalky.com](http://www.deltadentalky.com)

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# Visit your dentist

It could save your life.



# Delta Dental is helping you stay healthy

You have an important benefit under your Delta Dental plan. It's called the BrushTest®, an oral brush biopsy. The BrushTest is used to prevent and detect a serious disease—oral cancer. The BrushTest is a breakthrough in the fight against oral cancer. It's an innovative tool that makes it easier for your dentist to rule out the chance that a common red or white spot in your mouth is an early sign of something more serious.



## How would my dentist find a spot?

Your dentist and dental hygienist closely examine your mouth, jaw, and facial area on a regular basis. Since many people visit their dentists more often than their medical doctors, dental professionals are likely to find spots that may need further testing. As with any disease, early detection of oral cancer is very important.

## Should I be concerned if my dentist does a BrushTest?

Certainly not! Dentists may see red or white spots in the mouths of about 10 percent of their patients. Most of these spots are harmless and are not precancerous or cancerous. But to be certain, your dentist may want to test the spot using a BrushTest. This is what happens:

- Your dentist uses a small brush to take a sample from the tissue in your mouth.
- The test is quick, accurate, and involves little or no discomfort for you.
- Your dentist sends the sample to a laboratory for computer-assisted analysis.
- Delta Dental pays the approved percentage of both the procedure fee and the fee for the laboratory analysis for covered patients.

## Can my dentist find other diseases?

Yes! Your dentist knows that many diseases can cause signs and symptoms in and around your mouth and jaw. In fact, more than 120 diseases, including cancer, diabetes, and heart disease, have symptoms that can be identified through an oral exam. As you can see, your oral health is an important part of your overall health!

## Why does Delta Dental care?

Delta Dental's purpose is to advance and promote the improvement of oral health. Your Delta Dental plan is designed to help you get the dental care you need to maintain the very best health. We believe this improves your quality of life and, in the long run, reduces health problems.

**More than 120 diseases have symptoms that can be identified through an oral exam, making your oral exam important to your overall health!**