Perform a six-step oral cancer self-exam each month.

Using a bright light and a mirror:

1. Remove any dentures
2. Look and feel inside the lips and the front of gums
3. Tilt head back to inspect and feel the roof of your mouth
4. Pull the cheek out to see its inside surface as well as the back of the gums
5. Pull out your tongue and look at all of its surfaces
6. Feel for lumps or enlarged lymph nodes (glands) in both sides of the neck including under the lower jaw

When performing an exam look for:

- White patches of the oral tissues — leukoplakia
- Red patches — erythroplakia
- Red and white patches — erythroleukoplakia
- A sore that fails to heal and bleeds easily

- An abnormal lump or thickening of the tissues of the mouth
- Chronic sore throat or hoarseness
- Difficulty in chewing or swallowing
- A mass or lump in the neck

Your family dentist or oral and maxillofacial surgeon is in the best position to detect oral cancer during your routine dental examinations.

For more information, visit MyOMS.org.