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**Pacific Dental Services® Recognizes Oral Cancer Awareness Month #CheckOralCancer**

*PDS®-Supported Dental Practices Provide Oral Cancer Screenings for Patients*

IRVINE, CALIF. April 1, 2019 – Every hour, a person dies from oral cancer. [Pacific Dental Services (PDS®)](https://www.pacificdentalservices.com/) joins the [Oral Cancer Foundation](https://oralcancerfoundation.org/events/oral-head-neck-cancer-awareness-month/) in recognition of Oral Cancer Awareness Month with a campaign to increase awareness about the risks of oral cancer and to encourage patients to get screened for this disease, which is the 6th most common form of cancer. PDS-supported dental practices offer oral cancer screenings for their patients during regular dental visits. PDS-supported dentists can perform a standard oral soft tissue exam, as well as utilize the [VELscope](https://ledapteryx.com/velscope/)[®](https://ledapteryx.com/velscope/)[Vx Enhanced Oral Assessment System](https://ledapteryx.com/velscope/), a handheld scope that uses natural tissue fluorescence to enable clinicians to visualize oral mucosal abnormalities before patients are able to see or feel them. With VELscope, dentists can detect abnormalities in just one or two minutes.

“I consider VELscope a standard of care,” said [Komal Patel, DMD](https://www.springcypressmoderndentistry.com/meet-our-team/team-member.komal-patel-staff-id-19560.html). “It’s like fluoride to me. We offer the VELscope exam to all patients over the age of 21, regardless of pre-existing conditions. What made me change my mindset about the exam was when I learned oral cancer is one of the top 10 cancers leading to death.”

According to the [American Cancer Society](https://www.cancer.org/cancer/oral-cavity-and-oropharyngeal-cancer/about/key-statistics.html), in 2019 it’s expected that approximately 53,000 people in the U.S. will get oral cavity or oropharyngeal cancer; an estimated 10,860 will die of these cancers. Oral cancer can present on the cheeks, lips, tongue, hard and soft palate, floor of the mouth, sinuses, and pharynx. It’s more than twice as common in men as in women.

PDS-supported practices are committed to bringing awareness to patients about the link between oral health and whole-body health – what PDS and its supported practices call the [Mouth-Body Connection®](https://www.smilegeneration.com/education/mouth-body-connection/). Research shows that harmful bacteria and inflammation in the mouth can indicate and even cause systemic conditions throughout the body. Maladies of the mouth, including periodontal disease, may be linked with other medical conditions including oral cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, Alzheimer’s disease, rheumatoid arthritis, and more.

Interested patients are encouraged to contact [The Smile Generation](https://www.smilegeneration.com/), the referral service that connects prospective patients with trusted local dentists in their communities.

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**About Pacific Dental Services®**

Founded in 1994, Pacific Dental Services (PDS) is one of the country’s leading dental support organizations, providing supported autonomy that enables dentists to concentrate on clinical excellence and the highest levels of cost-effective comprehensive patient care. PDS originated the Private Practice+® model to enable dentists to focus on their passion: serving patients. PDS also pioneered the concept of Modern Dentistry so that dentists are equipped to combine advances in the latest technology with the best operational practices and procedures, highly skilled support staff and a commitment to ongoing training and education. PDS continues to grow, with over 700 supported dental offices across the United States and plans to expand into several new markets. PDS has been on the Inc. 5000 list of the fastest growing private companies in America 13 times. PDS supported dentists aim to be the provider of choice in all the markets they serve and to develop Patients for Life™.

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