# Oral Cancer   Fact Sheet

- A person dies from oral cancer every hour.

- Approximately 49,000 people in the US will be newly diagnosed with oral cancer in 2016-it represents about 3% of all cancers.

- Over 40% of those diagnosed will die within five years – National Cancer Institute.

- The high mortality rate associated with oral cancer is due to late stage diagnosis.

- There has been a .6% increase EACH of the past 10 years of oral and pharyngeal cancers.

- Exposure to the HPV-16 virus (human papilloma virus) is a fast growing risk factor for oral cancer.

- The mortality rate associated with oral cancer has not improved significantly in the last 40 years.

- 90% of oral cancer occurs in patients 45 years or older, which encompasses "all" 84M Baby Boomers

Up until 10 years ago drinking and smoking were the largest risk factors for acquiring oral cancer (and a male, 50+ years was the most susceptible).  In the last years the demographics have changed.  There is a significant increase in the <30 year olds getting oral cancer.  This is may be due to an increase in smokeless tobacco (including vaping) usage or other oral habits.

There has been a large increase in Oral Pharyngeal cancer (OPC) which is located in the back of the throat – the most difficult place to see.  The most common marker in these cancers is from HPV 16.  The biggest incline in cases is 50+ year old men.  The whys behind this is not all known.  Because of the increase propensity for cervical and penile cancers due to HPV, HPV vaccination is now recommended for boys and girls by the age of 14-but vaccination will not help those that are older and have become sexually active.  Vaccination may help to

decrease OPC in younger people-we will have to wait and see as research is developing.

We perform an oral cancer exam once a year and include Velscope as a secondary screening method.

Traditional oral mucosal examination tools rely on reflected light to visualize the oral cavity. VELscope® Vx uses tissue  fluorescence rather than reflectance. Tissue fluorescence visualization, in most cases, enables us to see the effects of cellular, structural, and/or metabolic activity changes in oral mucosal tissues by observing the fluorescence response of oral tissues in response to light excitation.