

Light shines way to early detection of oral cancer

August 8 2007

A light being trialed by University of Queensland researchers is showing promise as a tool for early detection of oral cancer – one of the deadliest cancers.

Dental researcher Dr Camile Farah who has studied a variety of light detection options, said a similar technique had been shown to be effective in detecting early changes associated with cervical cancer.

“The battery-operated device, the size of a dental drill, emits diffused light which shows up changes in the soft tissue,” Dr Farah said.

“If this technique can enable early detection of oral cancer, it will improve the survival rate for this invasive cancer.”

“Oral cancer is an extremely deadly form of cancer. Worldwide, the incidence is increasing and survival rates are not improving. Approximately 2000 people are diagnosed with oral cancer in Australia each year and nearly 500 die from the disease. The 5-year survival rate for these patients is 50 percent, at best,” he said.

Dr Farah, with Bachelor of Dental Science Honours student, Ms Lidiya McIntosh, are trialing the detection device with the assistance of public dental patients attending the School of Dentistry's Turbot Street Clinic. The clinic combines student education with a dental service. Fourth and fifth year students provide around 50,000 supervised treatments for public patients each year.

Dr Farah said that any patient referred to the clinic by their dentist or doctor for a suspicious lesion in the mouth would be eligible for inclusion in the study. The aim is to screen as many people as possible, to determine the efficacy of the light-emitting device.

Source: UQ

Citation: Light shines way to early detection of oral cancer (2007, August 8) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2007-08-early-oral-cancer.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.