

# Tongue Cancer

Tongue cancer can either be a type of oral cavity (mouth) cancer, or an oropharyngeal (throat) cancer depending on where the cancer is located on the tongue. Most tongue cancer begins in the thin, flat cells that line the surface of your tongue.

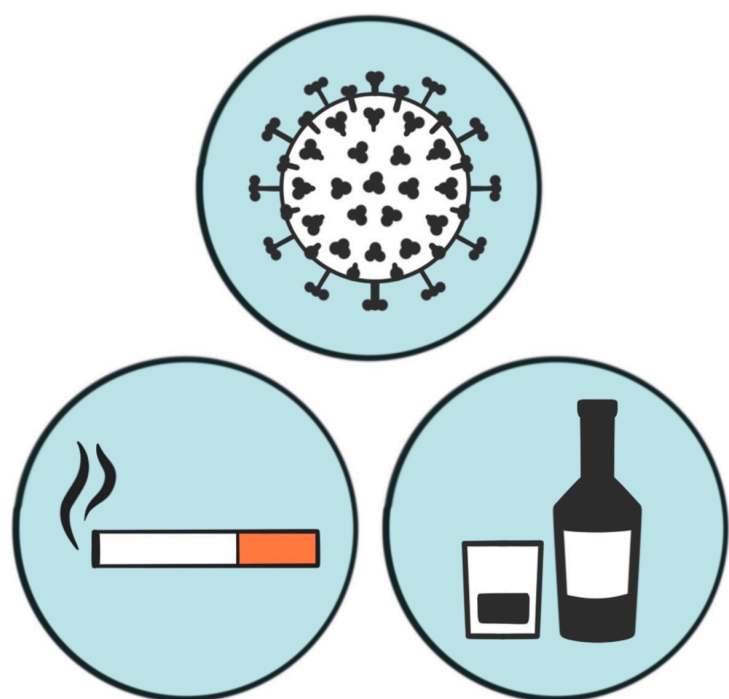
Tongue cancer is most common in people ages 40 and up, it affects men twice as much as woman and African American men in particular are at higher risk.

Tongue cancer can be a deadly disease, and you should consult your dentist immediately if you notice any large red bumps or growths that did not result from an injury (accidentally biting your tongue). Like all cancers, tongue cancer is not 100% preventable, but you can make choices that reduce your chances of tongue cancer.



## What Can Increase Your Chances of Tongue Cancer?

- Human papillomavirus aka HPV (especially in women)
- Smoking (tobacco use, vaping, or marijuana use)
- Drinking alcohol
- Aging (most cases occur in people over 40)
- Poor nutrition and malnutrition
- Genetics (if there is a history of tongue cancer or cancer in your family, you are at a greater risk)



## How The Dentist Can Treat Tongue Cancer

Tongue cancers are classified in four stages, T1, T2, T3, and T4. T1 and T2 are considered early stage and T3 and T4 are considered advanced stage.

Treatment options for each stage can include:

T1 and T2 stages:

- Surgery or radiation (when surgery is not a good option for the patient)

T3 and T4 stages:

- A combination of surgery and radiation
- Chemotherapy is used for severe cases where the cancer has spread to beyond the tongue, most commonly to the lymph nodes.

