Oral Cancer – Patient information leaflet
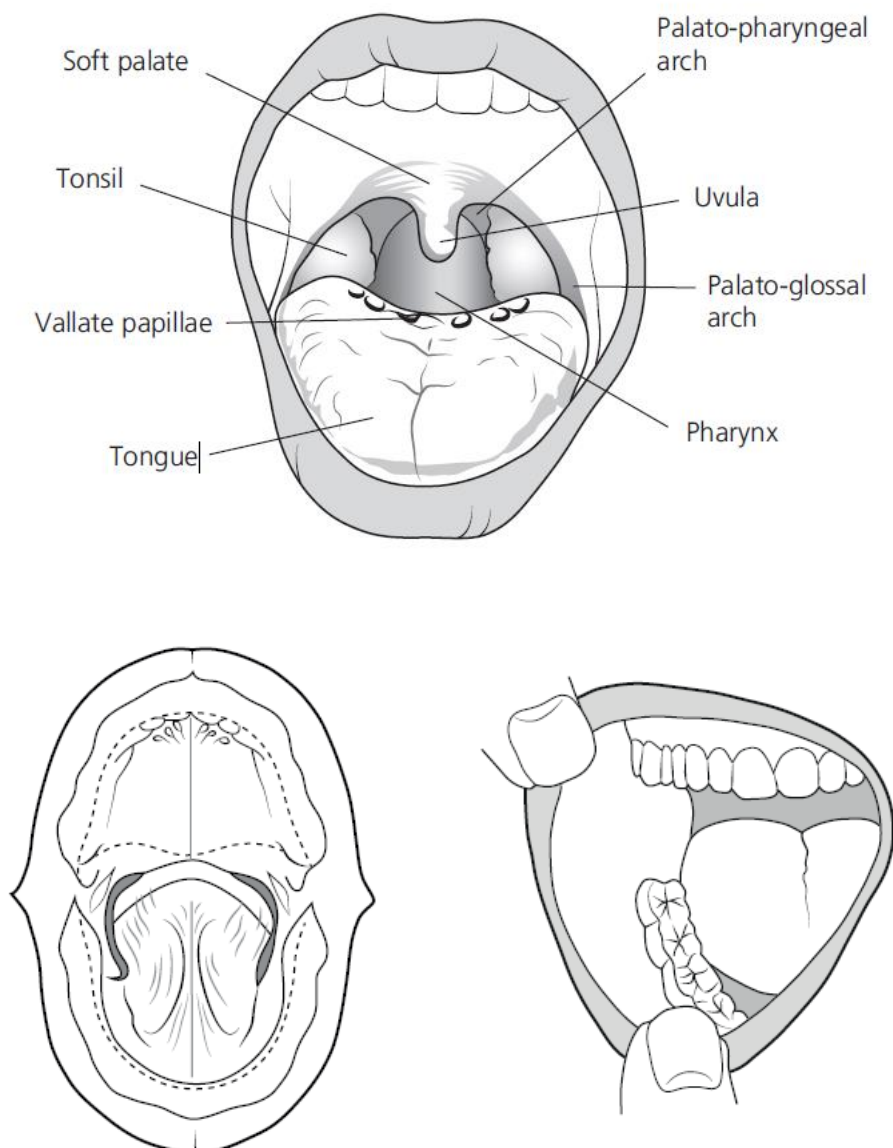
It has also been produced to provide useful information and guidance on the next steps of your journey following your diagnosis of oral cancer.

What is oral cancer?

Oral cancer is cancer of the mouth, which is a malignant lesion (mass) within the oral cavity (mouth). The diagnosis will have been made following a biopsy (tissue sample) taken by your medical team.

What areas are within the oral cavity?

The oral cavity (mouth) is divided into areas, which your team may refer to when discussing your diagnosis and treatment. The following diagram will help to illustrate the structures of the oral cavity (mouth).

West Yorkshire and Harrogate
Cancer Alliance

What are the functions of the mouth?

Your mouth helps to form your natural expressions. It is central to how everything works when you:

- Eat / chew
- Drink / swallow
- Speak

What investigations may I need to have?

Firstly, a detailed examination of your mouth and neck by a member of the medical team

- A full history of your symptoms and general health
- Tissue biopsy (sample taken by minor surgery)
- X-rays
- CT scan
- MRI scan
- Blood tests
- Ultrasound
- Examination under anaesthetic
- Dental check

What are the possible treatments for oral (mouth) cancer?

- Surgery to resect (remove) the cancer
- Chemotherapy (drug treatment)
- Radiotherapy (X-ray treatment)
- Laser
- Or a combination of these treatments

What happens once all the tests are completed?

Once all your tests are complete, the results are discussed at a meeting called the MDT (Multi-disciplinary team) meeting, where a large team of health care professionals meet to review your tests and discuss the best treatment options for your individual case. You may not come into contact with all of them, just the ones involved in your care.

The team may include:

- Consultant maxillofacial surgeons, ENT surgeons, or plastic surgeons all qualified in cancer care
- Specialist Nurses trained in cancer care (key worker)
- Oncologist (Specialist cancer doctors)
- Specialist Speech and Language Therapist (professionals who are trained to assess and educate about swallowing and speech)
- Pathologists (professionals who analyse the tissue samples)
- Radiologists (X-ray and scan experts)
- Hygienist
- Dietitian
- Restorative Dentist (assesses your teeth before, and helps to
- restore your mouth after, treatment in order to promote mouth function and appearance)
- Anaplastologists (professionals who make prostheses to help rehabilitation of both function and appearance)

The meeting is held every week and you will usually be seen in clinic to discuss the findings and possible treatment plans available to you.

At this appointment you will either meet or be given the number for a clinical nurse specialist, who will act as your key worker. Your key worker is there to help guide you through your care and keep you informed about all aspects of your treatment.

A variety of information will also be available to you at this time regarding your diagnosis and treatment plan, alongside other sources of support and services available to you and your family. It helps if you bring a relative or friend to the clinic with you to listen to the information given to you at this time.

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the service.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

ਜ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਪ੍ਰਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਵਿਭਾਗਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور فارمیٹ یا زبان می درکار ہوں، تو برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے می ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

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المعلومات هذه على الحصول احتجت إذا" أعلاه المذكور