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# City of El Paso Recognizes Oral Cancer Awareness Month

## Community Encouraged to get Regular Dental Check Ups and get the HPV Vaccine Series

**El Paso, Texas**— In recognition of National Oral Cancer Awareness Month, the City of El Paso Department of Public Health (DPH) wants to reduce the incidence and mortality of oral cancer.

City Public Health officials urge all citizens to complete the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine series and obtain regular oral examinations by an oral health professional.

“Improving oral and oropharyngeal cancer awareness in our community is imperative,” said City-County Local Health Authority Dr. Hector Ocaranza. “Oral cancer has an incidence rate of about 7.2 per 100,000 residents—nearly 14,000 of our friends, family members or neighbors—in El Paso County and affects males twice as much as females in the U.S. But we as a community can work to reduce the incidence rate by taking the preventative care and talking with your loved ones about the importance of oral healthcare.”

The Department of Public Health Medicaid Waiver Program offers free HPV vaccines for those between the ages of 9 to 26 who are uninsured or underinsured. For more information, contact (915) 212-6532.

Residents can take part in Oral Cancer Awareness Month by:

- **Reducing the use of tobacco products**  
Tobacco use and vaping significantly increases the risk of infection by HPV, which causes oral or oropharyngeal cancer.
- **Getting screened**  
Oral and oropharyngeal cancers occur most often in the tongue, soft and hard palate, tonsils, gums and back of the throat, which is why regular oral and dental examinations by a health professional are important.
- **Getting the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccine**  
According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), HPV is known to cause approximately 70 percent of oral and oropharyngeal cancer cases, and the HPV vaccine was developed to prevent infection by the high-risk types of HPV that cause cancers such as oral and oropharyngeal cancer.

For more information on the services and health screenings provided by DPH, visit [EPHealth.com](https://www.ephealth.com) under the Services Tab [Medicaid Waiver](#) or call 2-1-1.

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Promoting **Transparent & Consistent Communication**  
Among All Members of the Community

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