



e-newsletter

October 30, 2009

America's Giving Challenge OCF Needs Your Help!

Dear OCF Volunteers & Supporters,

We are requesting your help to participate in America's Giving Challenge on November 2, 2009. America's giving challenge is a 30-day national competition, presented by the Case Foundation, Causes, and PARADE Magazine, encourages people to leverage their online and offline social

The Oral Cancer Foundation
awarded "best in the US" - Small Non-profit category



networks to help recruit supporters and win cash awards totaling \$170,000 for the causes they care most about!

Participants in this 30-day national competition will compete for daily and overall awards based on the number of donations generated for their cause, not dollars raised. Daily awards include \$1,000 each day to the cause with the highest number of unique donations that day and \$500 to the cause with the second highest number of unique donations.

We are asking for your help to win the daily award on November 2, 2009 by donating \$10 to The Oral Cancer Awareness cause. Your donation will go to benefit The Oral Cancer Foundation and if we receive the most donations on November 2nd, your donation will have helped us reach our goal to win the daily award. You can donate by visiting the following link:

http://www.causes.com/donations/select_donation_method?cause_id=334112

Your \$1,000 donation will cover the cost of one refurbished VELscope oral cancer screening device. By the end of this year, OCF hopes to donate four VELscope screening devices to free-clinics in areas of underserved populations. These devices will be used to screen patients for oral cancer that cannot afford normal dental care. Earlier this month we donated one device to a free-clinic in Phoenix, AZ. It was greatly appreciated and is presently being used in screenings. The press release can be read here: <http://oralcancernews.org/wp/oral-cancer-foundation-to-donate-screening-devices-to-free-clinics/>

Please help spread the word! The more donations we receive on November 2nd, the higher our chances of winning the America's Giving Challenge.

Thank you for your help,

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Artists transform symbols of pain into objects of beauty



Happy Halloween from OCF!

Are you a Cancer Survivor?



Request an OCF Cancer Survivor Button! In 1, 2, 5, & 10 year brackets. Email cannon@oralcancerfoundation.org for more details.

*A Perk for Coffee Lovers:
Java May Lower Oral*



Lying on a table in Cookie Kerxton's tiny Bethesda art studio is a symbol of unparalleled pain and suffering: a white, plastic mask of her own face she wore during treatment for throat cancer.

The loss of speech, being fed through her stomach, the severe dry mouth, the burns on her neck — the mask serves as a reminder of her lowest moments, spent strapped to an operating table with the mask covering her face and bolted to the table, the radiation blasting away at the malignant polyps that lined her throat. "You're only there for about 10 minutes," Kerxton, 73, said last week at the Upstairs Art Studio on St. Elmo Avenue. "But it's really not fun."

When Kerxton beat her cancer, after four long months of chemotherapy in 2008, she wanted to keep the radiation mask, a bland but morbid piece of plastic that Kerxton said her friends call "ghoulish." Since, Kerxton gathered more than 100 radiation masks from area hospitals and found more than 100 artists from across the country to turn the masks into pieces of art, rather than symbols of pain.

"It's taking something 'ghoulish' and making it something someone would want to have on their wall," Kerxton said.

In September, Kerxton's exhibit, called "Courage Unmasked," debuted before more than 500 people at a fundraiser and live auction at the Katzen Arts Center at American University. The roughly 40 masks still for sale will be exhibited starting Saturday at the Pyramid Atlantic Art Center community store in Silver Spring.

The proceeds from all art sales will go toward 9114HNC, a foundation Kerxton began that benefits patients of head and neck cancer and has already raised \$29,000. The money is much deserved for patients of a disease that doesn't receive the donations or the publicity of more common cancers but typically affects low-income or elderly people, Kerxton said.



Raise high the coffee bean! Good news, coffee-drinkers: a new study shows your beverage of choice may lower your chances of getting oral, esophageal and pharyngeal (back-of-the-throat) cancer.

Japanese researchers report in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* this week that people they studied who drank a cup or more of Joe daily had about a 50 percent less chance than non-imbibers of developing these cancers. The scientists based their findings on 13 years of data of some 38,000 people ages 40 to 64 with no history of cancer.

According to the study, coffee drinking lowered the odds of these types of cancer even in people with high-risk behaviors (read: smoking and boozing).

"Caffeine has been suggested to suppress the progression of tumor cells," senior study author Toru Naganuma, an epidemiological researcher at Japan's Tohoku University, told *ScientificAmerican.com* in an email. He noted that other studies have also linked moderate coffee drinking to reduced risk of liver cancer.

"The evidence is pretty strong" in this research says Ann Gillenwater



There are an estimated 35,720 new cases of head and neck cancer nationally so far this year and 7,600 deaths, said Gopaul Bajaj, who was the director of head and neck cancer radiation oncology at Johns Hopkins University's Kimmel Cancer Center in Baltimore when Kerxton was admitted there.

Many patients are afflicted with the disease at older ages after years of tobacco or alcohol abuse or living in urban areas, Bajaj said. Because radiation is applied to more sensitive areas, the side effects can be more severe and last longer.

"It's making something beautiful out of something they associated with so much pain and suffering," Bajaj, who has since moved from Johns Hopkins to Inova Fairfax Hospital in Virginia, said of the masks, one of which he bought at the fundraiser.

After sending e-mails out to artists she knows and receiving more than 100 responses, Kerxton began collecting blank masks and distributing them to artists as far away as California and London. The response was so overwhelming Kerxton didn't even have time to decorate a mask herself.

The masks were formed by taking plastic that Kerxton said felt like "wet noodles" and forming it to a patient's face before it hardened. With a blank slate and no model to work from, the artists sent in a variety of different interpretations of the mask.

Rockville artist and cancer survivor Carol Kanga asked Bajaj, who was also her doctor, for a purple leftover radiation mask so she could preserve her own mask as a reminder of the 35-session, seven-week radiation treatment she conquered in 2006. She turned it into a vibrant swirl of purple, green and red, celebrating her triumph over the skin cancer on her neck and the tumor beneath her tongue.

If the masks hadn't been available "I would've lost half of my tongue and part of my neck," said Kanga, 53, who was introduced to Kerxton through Bajaj. "It's an incredible symbol for me, of the advancement of science in helping humanity." [Read More...](#)

David Nasto Memorial Walk 2009 Event Recap by Susan Lauria

a professor of head and neck surgery at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, who was not involved in this study.

But that doesn't mean you should start downing double espressos hourly. Recent research suggests that too much caffeine

Besides, the study authors point out, caffeine alone is not the answer, noting that "high-level consumption of fresh vegetables and fruit" have also been linked to lower cancer rates.

The upshot, says Gillenwater: to lower your risk of oral cancers, "you want to have good dental hygiene and eat fresh fruits and vegetables, and maybe [drink] coffee. Who knew?" can lead to insomnia, anxiety and might up the risk of miscarriage in the early stages of pregnancy.

How to know if you have had a good oral cancer examination.



Preparing for the exam: If you have dentures (plates) or partials, you will be asked to remove them. No one can see all the soft tissue areas of the mouth with any appliances in place.

Your health care provider will inspect your face, neck, lips, and mouth to look for any signs of cancer. Clearly a sore on your lip will be obvious to everyone, even you. But some of what they are



The 2nd Annual David Nasto Memorial walk was held on September 26th, at scenic Perona Farms in Andover, NJ. It was a beautiful sunny day in northern New Jersey which was a far cry from last year when a noreaster hit the area! After the 4 mile walk, attendees enjoyed hamburgers and hotdogs, coffee, donuts, bagels, and water ice all donated by local merchants.

Free oral cancer screenings were conducted local dentists, and our own Dr. Jerry Wilck was the featured speaker. He did a wonderful job!! The walk raised approximately \$11,500 in donations and that includes OCF member Donna Butchers "Walk in Place" funds as well.

It was a great day! Not only do we honor my brothers memory each year, we are keeping oral cancer awareness alive in the minds of all who attended! The walk ended with great music by Wry Toast Band! Next years event is set for September 25, 2010! Hope to see you there!!



looking for is very subtle. Is there asymmetry, or does part of your external mouth not move well, or possibly droop? Some doctors are looking at these things when you first approach and sit in the chair, and it may not be apparent to you that their observations are actually taking place. But a good practitioner is sensitive to these small giveaways... a slur in your speech, a corner of the mouth that does not seem to move well in concert with everything else, a subtle swelling on one side of your face causing asymmetry. By themselves, these are not areas of specific oral cancer concern, but they are all part of putting together the puzzle of different signs, which may indicate you are worthy of referral to a specialist, or further diagnostic procedures.

With both hands, he or she will feel the external area under your jaw and the sides of your neck, checking for lumps (enlarged lymph nodes) that may suggest inflammation or more. Many times if these nodes are painless but hard and enlarged, and feel like they are fixated in position, it can be a sign of cancer. When feeling the floor of your mouth (bi-manually palpating it), a finger is placed under your tongue and the fingers of the other hand placed under your chin. Rolling the soft tissues of the floor of your mouth between the two, they can detect enlarged nodes or other hard spots called indurations that may be an area of concern. Anyone not using their fingers to



***Plymouth, "Walk the Rock" 2009 Recap by
Laureen Brady***



The third annual "Walk the Rock" was held Sunday, October 4, 2009 in Dorchester, MA. The walk benefited The Oral Cancer Foundation and was created to honor Jeannie Priolo of Plymouth, MA who lost her battle to oral cancer in August 2007. Of the

34,000 people newly diagnosed with oral cancer this year, only half will be alive in 5 years. This silent killer takes the life of one person in the U.S. every hour; however; when found early, oral cancers have an 80% to 90% survival rate and can be treated with great success!!

The event kicked off at Mother's Rest Area in South Boston and took participants gathered from across Massachusetts on a 5 mile walk to Castle Island and back. Free oral cancer screenings were offered and performed by faculty and students from the Harvard School of Dental Medicine while Harvard Medical School students performed blood pressure screenings. During registration, a DJ provided great music to keep the crowd "rockin" and inspired.

Many dental hygiene schools, including Mount Ida and Forsyth, as well as local dental



examine you and only looking with a mirror, or worse using just a pair of wooden tongue blades, is going to miss things. Touch is important. He or she will then look at and feel the insides of your lips and cheeks to check for possible signs of cancer, or pre-cancerous tissues changes, such as red and/or white patches, or thickened areas.

Your provider will have you stick out your tongue so it can be checked for swelling or abnormal color or texture. They will be watching to see if as you extend it, it deviates to one side or the other, a possible sign that something is affecting the nerves which control its movement. Then, using a small piece of gauze, he or she will gently pull your tongue to one side, then the other to fully visualize its edges, a common location for lesions to occur. They will likely feel the borders of the tongue (again for hard spots) at the same time. A common site for oral cancer to occur is the base of the tongue where it begins to curve down your throat. This area cannot be visualized well unless the tongue is pulled forward, and the gauze is necessary to do this. If they did not do this, they have missed an important location to examine. The underside of your tongue will also be checked. No one forgets if their examiner pulled their tongue firmly out of their mouth to see this area.

In addition, he or she will look at the roof and floor of your mouth, as well as the back of your throat and the tonsillar pillars on each side. When viewed directly from the front, the opening to the back of your mouth and throat should appear symmetrical and not swollen on either side. [Read More...](#)

Biotene SuperSoft Toothbrush

*Now Available in the OCF
online store*

offices, organized and participated in this year's walk as teams to



show their support in helping to raise awareness of oral cancer. There were many others who wore t-shirts to honor loved ones lost or battling this disease. The day was a wonderful opportunity for all to come together for support, awareness, and fun!! Please check out recent photos of this year's walk at www.walktherock.net.

If you would like to make a donation to "Walk the Rock" to show your support in the fight against this invasive disease, please visit The Oral Cancer Foundation's website store at www.ocfstore.org. At checkout, specify in the comment box that your donation is to benefit "Walk the Rock".

Today's smokeless tobacco is just as addictive and marketed to the young



It's a misconception that just because you don't smoke nicotine, it is less addictive and less dangerous than a cigarette. That's the fallacy and danger behind a marketing ploy for a new take on a centuries old product, snuff.

Whereas the old snuff, popular in the 1970s and 1980s in round paper containers or bags under the name Copenhagen or Skoal, was chewed and spit out, today's snuff comes in fancy containers with equally avant-garde aromas and names. And unlike its predecessor, this snuff isn't pinched into one's gums or chewed, it's inhaled through the nostrils. And it isn't being used just by baseball players or teenage boys emulating their sports idols.

Snuff is being marketed to tweens, teens and college students, both female and male, as hip, cool and healthy. It's available for a nominal cost with a simple click online.

Yet, it's anything but harmless, according to an area ear, nose and throat specialist, who is concerned that in any form, nicotine is extremely addictive. And what makes snuff so dangerous is that it doesn't fall



Once patients begin radiation and chemotherapy treatments for oral cancer, their mouths will become very sensitive from the treatments. Painful mucocitis sores are routine complications of both chemo and radiation. Even though this is the case, it is imperative that their oral hygiene been kept at an optimum, since failure to do so has severe consequences. These brushes are made with ultra soft bristles, designed to be used during the approximately 6 weeks of the worst part of the treatments, so not to further aggravate the delicate soft tissues of the mouth. After that period of time, most patients are able to tolerate brushing with the softest toothbrushes you can purchase at the drug store. OCF highly recommends these brushes for the treatment period, and that they be discarded each week, as it is difficult to keep them completely bacteria free when the natural flora of the mouth is being disrupted by treatment. They are not available in drug stores, and OCF is one of the few sources for a brush this soft.

- 0.003 bristles assure a gentle cleaning without irritating inflamed or unhealthy tissues. The tapered bristles safely and effectively remove plaque and food debris from gum line.
- Over 4,000 hair-like bristles comfortably massage extra-sensitive areas. The special hair-like bristles safely and effectively remove plaque.
- Slim line head and narrow neck for a longer reach; also a beveled handle for comfortable hand fit.
- Indications: Helps prevent infections of oral tissues and fights cavities with regular use Recommended for use

under any federal regulations, according to a local tobacco expert.

Many feel it's the burning and inhaling of tobacco that exposes users to most carcinogens. Some specialists feel that, for health reasons, if you are going to use tobacco, you are better off using nasal snuff. But nasal snuff contains nicotine and is highly addictive, says Dr. Zephron Newmark, an ENT specialist with Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center, Plains Township.

"There is danger for long-term use," said Newmark. "If you become hooked, it can be difficult to stop."

Tony Delonti, a member of the local chapter of the American Lung Association who also serves on the Luzerne County Tobacco Free Coalition, said these latest products are outside the realm of the regular tobacco industry. "It's not a direct tobacco product so it's not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration and it doesn't come under the recent tobacco guidelines passed by the Obama administration," he said.

Newmark said that nasal snuff does limit one negative side effect of nicotine, and that is the combustion. Still, he said, despite the absence of tar and gases such as carbon monoxide, oxides of nitrogen and many other toxic combustion products, snuff is still harmful.

"Nicotine is a poison," said Newmark. "It's a dangerous compound. It is not classified as a drug so the FDA is not required to regulate it."

A bill passed in June called the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act allows the FDA to ban candy flavorings in cigarettes and cigars. Tobacco companies also will be required to cover any carton images with large graphic warnings.

The regulation specifically targets what the FDA terms "characterizing" flavors of the tobacco or its paper or container, such as strawberry, grape, orange, clove, cinnamon, pineapple, vanilla, coconut, licorice, cocoa, chocolate, cherry and coffee. However, some flavorings, like menthol, are permitted.

The law doesn't let the FDA ban nicotine or tobacco outright, but the agency will be able to regulate what goes into tobacco products, make public those ingredients and prohibit certain marketing campaigns, especially those geared toward children.

Two of the three largest U.S. tobacco companies filed suit against federal authorities in September, claiming the law violates their right to free speech.

The threshold of lung cancer from smoking is several years — however, if snuff is, indeed, attracting a younger audience, then elementary school students inhaling the component now could be diagnosed with cancer in their early 20s or 30s, he said. [Read More...](#)

with Biotene toothpastes, which are free from irritating strong flavorings and SLS which can irritate gums.

- This product is recommended by OCF for patients.

[Click here to purchase a 6-pack of Biotene SuperSoft Toothbrushes](#)

Baking for Good



Order yummy treats and support OCF at the same time!! When you purchase items from the bakery, Baking for Good will donate 15% of the total to OCF! They have everything from iced cookies, brownies, Vegan & Gluten-free cookies & more all of which can be ordered by the dozens!

A vertical banner with a light blue top section and a light green bottom section. On the left, the word "shop" is written vertically in white on a dark grey background, and "donate" is written vertically in white on a dark grey background. The top section contains the text "Click here to help NOW." in bold black, a circular logo for the Oregon Cancer Foundation, and the text "amazon.com" in bold black. The bottom section contains the text "Help OCF with every amazon.com purchase. Click to Shop Today!" in bold black.

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Want to help OCF?

Organize a Walk or Fundraiser, Become a Volunteer, & Spread Awareness in your local Community! Contact [Susan Lauria](#) for more information.

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