



HARRISBURG, Pa. (04/19/2021) – With COVID-19 vaccination this spring's top news story, United Concordia Dental is also focused on another vaccine that can help provide long-term protection against oral cancer of the throat, tongue and tonsils: the HPV (human papillomavirus) vaccine.

[According to the CDC](#), HPV is estimated to cause 70 percent of cancers of the throat, tongue and tonsils in the United States, with 10 percent of men and nearly four percent of women infected with oral HPV.

Chronic sore throat, hoarseness or sudden weight loss are symptoms that should be brought to a doctor's attention. While oral cancers may take years to develop following HPV infection, the HPV vaccine reduces the chance of infection: [15 years of widespread HPV vaccination among U.S. children has resulted in an 80% drop in new infections](#) in women and girls under the age of 25, according to HealthDay.com. The HPV shot is recommended by the CDC initially at age 11 or 12, and for anyone through age 26.

"It is certainly very topical at the moment, how vaccines can help improve our quality of life," said Dr. Stephen Canis, national dental director for United Concordia. "Proactive steps taken in adolescence – such as the HPV shot – can drastically reduce the risk of oral cancers related to HPV, a risk that increases with age."

"Preventive measures should always be top of mind when considering your oral health, the same as overall health," Canis continued.

Use of tobacco products and alcohol abuse also contribute to increased chance of gum disease, higher plaque levels, tooth decay and mouth sores, all of which could lead to some forms of oral cancer. Alcohol should be used in moderation for one's oral health, among several other health considerations.

To learn more about United Concordia Dental, their large network of dentists and how great oral health promotes great overall health, visit [UnitedConcordia.com](https://www.unitedconcordia.com).

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