

## Oral cancer knowledge, attitudes, and practices among dentists in Khartoum State, Sudan

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### Abstract

The dental professions hold an important responsibility in the control of oral cancer and the early diagnosis highly depends on their knowledge. The present study was developed to assess the knowledge, attitude, and practice of dentists in Khartoum State regarding oral cancer prevention and early detection. An administered questionnaire was structured and sent to all licensed 130 dentists working in public dental clinics in Khartoum State. Responses to the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive and analytical statistics. Although the majority of the dentists were knowledgeable about the major risk factors of oral cancer, more than half of the dentists reported they do not carry out any special examination to detect oral cancer in age 40 and above in asymptomatic patients. Dentists indicated their lack of training as the main barrier for conducting a comprehensive oral cancer examination. Interestingly, the vast majority of the dentists express their interest to have further oral cancer educational and training sessions. The findings of the present study suggested strongly that educational and training interventions are necessary to enhance preventive measures which may lead to reduce mortality and morbidity from oral cancer.

### Introduction

Cancer of the lip and oral cavity are significant public health issue, with approximately 300,000 new cases per annum and 145,000 deaths worldwide [1]. Head and neck cancers rank the sixth most prevalent type of cancers, globally [2]. The incidence and mortality rates are rising in most regions, particularly developing countries. Their impact on individuals and communities from related pain, suffering, impairment of function and high treatment cost, morbidity and mortality are significant [3].

The risk factors for oral cancer may vary in different cultural and socioeconomic groups. Tobacco and alcohol intake are the traditional well-established risk factors; their synergistic effect induce a 24-fold increase in the risk of oral cancer [4]. Other predisposing factors include occupational exposure to carcinogens, dietary deficiencies, viral infections, in particular, human papilloma virus, known to have a high oncogenic potential [5]. In this regard, cancer prevention can be increased by raising public awareness of the dangers associated with these activities.





















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