

VA



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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Milwaukee VA offers free oral cancer screenings April 3 for all Veterans

MILWAUKEE — Free oral cancer screenings will be available for all Veterans during an April 3 event at the Milwaukee VA Medical Center.

No appointments are needed for the [screenings](#), which will take place 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in Room 3435 of the medical center, 5000 W. National Ave., Milwaukee. Veterans do not need to qualify for VA health care or VA dental care in order to be screened. Milwaukee VA employees can also be screened.

The screenings will take about 15 minutes and will include examination inside the mouth as well as outside the head and neck. Dietary and nutrition experts will be on hand, along with tobacco cessation counselors.

“We’ll be looking for any signs of oral cancer, skin cancer or anything out of the ordinary,” said Dr. Kandice Klepper, periodontist with the Milwaukee VA Medical Center. “We’re teaming up with other departments to help enhance identifying risk factors and just giving more information out to participants.”

Veterans tend to be at higher risk of oral cancer than the general population, Klepper said, mostly due to higher use of tobacco and alcohol, which are the biggest risk factors for oral cancer. Other infectious diseases, like HPV, can also contribute to oral cancer as can excessive sun exposure.

According to the [Oral Cancer Foundation](#), 54,600 cases of oral cancer are diagnosed each year. Of those individuals, 43% will not survive longer than five years. One person dies every hour due to oral cancer, according to the foundation. The death rate is high because the cancer is often discovered late in development.

“We want to do whatever we can do to have an earlier diagnosis, which leads to better treatment outcomes,” Klepper said.

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NOTE TO MEDIA: *Please include this in your community calendars. A news article, free to use at your discretion, is available [here](#). You are also welcome to do a preview story and/or cover the event. Please RSVP to Milwaukee VA Public Affairs at vhamiwpublicaffairs@va.gov.*