

Oral Cancer Linked to Oral Sex

Caution: Sexual content

By Barb Anderson

According to the American Cancer Society, 34,000 people a year are diagnosed with oral cancer, and 7,500 die from it. Only half of those diagnosed survive five years. While oral cancers, along with cancers of the larynx, are strongly tied to smoking, the newest shocking revelation is that more and more cases of oral cancer are now linked to oral sex.

Oral cancer in non-smokers is becoming a growing problem—with cancer detected at the base of the tongue or in the throat. The culprit?—the human papillomavirus (HPV)—most likely transmitted through oral sex. This is the same virus that causes cervical cancer.

The May 10, 2007 *New England Journal of Medicine* reported a study by scientists that analyzed throat swabs from 100 patients who had oropharyngeal cancer, and 200 people without the disease. The results showed, “The cancer patients were 12 times as likely as the others to have an active HPV infection....HPV-16 DNA showed up in 72 percent of the throat cancers.” This is the strain considered most likely to cause cancer. HPV-16 can transform normal cells in the mucous membranes—like those lining both the cervix and oral cavity—into cancerous squamous cells.

Today, oral cancer is another by-product of promiscuity and society’s acceptance of oral sodomy as simply another choice in a sexual repertoire. Bill Clinton’s oral-sex-isn’t-sex defense during the Monica Lewinsky scandal, the normalization of homosexual behavior in the public schools, and the 2003 U.S. Supreme Court’s decision that struck down state anti-sodomy laws, have helped to fuel an increase in this behavior among adults as well as teens. Striking down the sodomy laws had the effect of legalizing and legitimizing (for some) oral and anal intercourse. Overturning the sodomy laws couldn’t undo the consequences of these dangerous and unhealthy acts, however.

Minnesota statute 609.293 defines sodomy: “‘Sodomy’ means carnally knowing any person by the anus or by or with the mouth.” This law prohibited oral or anal intercourse between any two people.

Most of the world, for good reason, has always outlawed acts of sodomy. We should have paid more attention to an old African proverb that states, “Don’t tear down a fence until you know why it was put up.”

The purpose of sodomy laws was to protect the family—the foundation of society. The law is a “teacher” and sodomy laws helped set society’s standard for acceptable conduct. Sodomy was at one time considered by most members of society as an “unnatural” form of sexual intercourse, and was only widely practiced by homosexuals and prostitutes.

A 1960 sex survey of college males by Drs. Phyllis and Eberhard Kronhausen (a sexually radical couple) revealed that Joe College was commonly a virgin. The Kronhausens found that oral sodomy was rare among college males and anal sodomy was unheard of. How times have changed.

Today, graphic descriptions of oral and anal sex are introduced in comprehensive sex education classes as alternative forms of intercourse—with the admonition to use condoms for “protection.”

Many “safe sex” educators are teaching teens how to make “dental dams” to practice safe oral sex. This is dangerous advice for teens. The CDC states (2003), “No barrier methods for use during oral sex have been evaluated as effective by the FDA.” Dental dams are *not* adequately protective, and recommending this to teens may put them at risk of acquiring sexually transmitted diseases in their mouth and throat. Oral sodomy remains a dangerous practice.

The American Journal of Epidemiology (F.N. Judson vol. 112, p 836-43) reports, “Studies have also indicated that the body’s natural immune system is broken down by repeated exposure to sperm during anal (and oral) intercourse....” According to research by Dr. John R. Diggs Jr. (*The Health Risks of Gay Sex*), “...ejaculate has components that are immunosuppressive. In the course of ordinary reproductive physiology, this allows the sperm to evade the immune defense of the female. Rectal insemination of rabbits has shown that sperm impaired the immune defenses of the recipient. Semen may have a similar impact on humans.”

Anal and oral sodomy are unhealthy and are not normal intercourse. They disregard human anatomy and function. The definition of *normal* is “that which functions according to its design.”

The female vagina was designed for intercourse. The vagina has natural lubricants, a network of muscles supporting it, and is able to endure intercourse without damage. It can resist the immunological actions that semen and sperm cause. The rectum cannot. Potentially dangerous bacteria can be contained in the anus and rectum. Anal sex can transmit a whole host of sexually transmitted diseases. Oral sex can transmit virtually all of the sexually transmitted diseases as well.

In the book *Epidemic: How Teen Sex is Killing Our Kids*, Dr. Meg Meeker states that while some teens believe that oral sex will leave them a technical virgin, it won’t leave them disease-free. The sad truth is that in addition to HPV, HIV is also spread through oral sex as are herpes, syphilis, gonorrhea, chancroid, intestinal parasites, and hepatitis A.

Oral sex also sets teens up for unhealthy relationships. Many girls will take with them into adulthood painful, traumatic memories of participating in a self-degrading act that can leave them feeling used and abused.

Parents, it’s time to protect your children from harmful, unhealthy messages about oral sex. Encourage your kids to put a fence around their sexuality so that ultimately they can experience joy and pleasure in true lovemaking with their future spouse.