

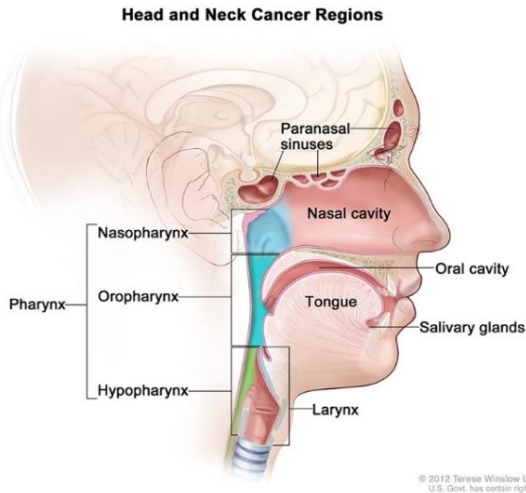


# Prairie Faith Parish Nurse News~~April 2023

*Walking alongside individuals to meet physical, emotional and spiritual needs,  
by connecting and/or creating healthy resources for their lives.*

## **April health observances include “Oral, Head and Neck Cancer Awareness Week”**

**Oral, head and neck cancer** accounts for about 6% of all cancers in the United States. The incidence of this type of cancer is increasing--this year, an estimated 110,000 people will develop oral, head and neck cancer in the U.S. While younger people can develop the disease, most people are older than 50 when they are diagnosed. ***Most head and neck cancers can be prevented.***



**What causes cancers of the head and neck?** Tobacco use, including smokeless tobacco (chewing tobacco and snuff) is the most important risk factor for head and neck cancers, especially cancers of the oral cavity, oropharynx, hypopharynx, and larynx. Alcohol use is another risk factor--people who use both tobacco and alcohol are at greater risk of developing these cancers than people who use either tobacco or alcohol alone. At least 75% of head and neck cancers are caused by tobacco and alcohol use. Infection with cancer-causing types of **human papillomavirus (HPV)**, especially HPV type 16, is a risk factor for some types of head and neck cancers, particularly oropharyngeal cancers that involve the tonsils or the base of the tongue.

### **Symptoms of concern that may affect specific areas of the head and neck include the following:**

- **Oral cavity.** A white or red patch on the gums, the tongue, or the lining of the mouth; a swelling of the jaw that causes dentures to fit poorly or become uncomfortable; and unusual bleeding or pain in the mouth.
- **Pharynx.** Trouble breathing or speaking; pain when swallowing; pain in the neck or the throat that does not go away; frequent headaches, ear pain, or ringing in the ears; or trouble hearing.
- **Larynx.** Pain when swallowing or ear pain.
- **Paranasal sinuses and nasal cavity.** Sinuses that are blocked and do not clear; chronic sinus infections that do not respond to treatment with antibiotics; bleeding through the nose; frequent headaches, swelling or other trouble with the eyes; pain in the upper teeth; or problems with dentures.
- **Salivary glands.** Swelling under the chin or around the jawbone, numbness or paralysis of the muscles in the face, or pain in the face, the chin, or the neck that does not go away.
- **Thyroid.** Lump or swelling in the neck, voice changes and difficulty swallowing.
- **Skin.** A sore on the lip, face, or ear that does not heal, or a mole or spot that changes size or color or begins to bleed.

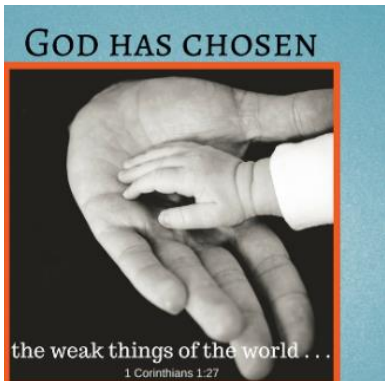
*(Because some of these symptoms may also be associated with other conditions, it is important to see your physician if you experience these symptoms to determine the cause.)*

**Early diagnosis is key to successful treatment of these types of cancers.**

**Sources of information:** Head and Neck Cancer Alliance <https://www.headandneck.org>  
and American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery [enthealth.org](http://enthealth.org)

**For information and support to stop smoking or using smokeless tobacco, consider utilizing the free resources through [www.kanquit.org](http://www.kanquit.org)**

*But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise;  
God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong. - 1 Corinthians 1:27*



All of us have weaknesses and limitations—emotional, spiritual or physical. These characteristics are there for a reason. God's best work is accomplished using weak, broken, and wounded people to transform communities into forces that can accomplish great things. The core of our Christian life is not what we can offer God but what God can accomplish through us. Regardless of how imperfect we may be, God does not call the qualified; God qualifies those who are called. When Jesus calls his disciples, some cannot stay awake as Jesus prays, and others argue over who will be the greatest. With this band of misfit disciples, Christ builds his church. As we continue this work as Jesus' disciples, we too can be used—even with all of our flaws and limitations—to the glory of God and for the love of God's people. Thanks be to God!

**MOVING FORWARD: What weakness in your life has God used for good?**

*(Source: Forward Day by Day, author The Reverend Glenice Robinson-Como)*

The next parish nurse advisory board meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 12 at 5:00 p.m. in the Bethlehem library. New ideas for the upcoming months will be the topic of discussion. Visitors are invited to attend any meeting or to share suggestions related to health and wellness of our community. Hope to see you at the meeting! 😊

Spring cleaning on your mind? Don't forget to sort through your medication cabinet for expired prescription medications as well as over-the-counter meds, vitamins and supplements. It's not safe to flush medications down the toilet or throw them in the trash. In WaKeeney, persons may take their expired medications or prescriptions they will not be using to the law enforcement center any time to be placed in their disposal box. You are also able to use a medication disposal box throughout the year at the Hays Walgreens pharmacy during pharmacy hours. Nancy has small Detera medication disposal bags available at no charge for your use at home, as another option.



### A Prayer in the Morning



This is another day, O Lord. I know not what it will bring forth, but make me ready, Lord, for whatever it may be. If I am to stand up, help me to stand bravely. If I am to sit still, help me to sit quietly. If I am to lie low, help me to do it patiently. And if I am to do nothing, let me do it gallantly. Make these more than words, and give me the Spirit of Jesus. Amen.

*(Source: Daily Prayer: A Resource of Forward Movement)*



The parish nurse ministry serves the community, regardless of any church affiliation. Feel free to call or email to: schedule a confidential appointment to discuss your health/wellness questions, schedule transportation to a medical/dental/counseling appointment if you need a ride, request a prayer shawl for someone in the community going through a difficult time, locate community health resources, request other parish nurse work, or discuss your ideas for the health ministry! 😊

Nancy Bollig, BSN, RN

parishnurse@ruraltel.net

785-743-2005 (leave a message, please)