

Dentist To Offer Oral Screenings With Extra Value At Health Expo

BY DONNA STRANGE

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A visit to the dentist may not be on your "to do" list today, but if you know what's good for you, better write "SEE DR. PEER AT EXPO SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26!" at the top of whatever list, calendar or schedule you use.

Michael C. Peer, D.D.S., will be offering free oral cancer screenings Sunday, February 26, 2 to 4 p.m., when Halifax Regional Health System holds its annual Healthy Living Expo Sunday at Halifax County High School.

Dr. Peer, who has offered oral cancer screenings at previous Health System Expos, this time will be bringing his intra-oral camera and monitor so he can get a better picture of anything that he thinks needs a second look.

The tiny camera, mounted on a flexible wand, helps identify anything that looks suspicious around the gum, under the tongue or in the cheek areas. As Dr. Peer looks for suspicious lesions and other abnormalities in a person's mouth, the participant will be able to see the area, greatly enlarged, on a monitor in front of him or her.

And what will Dr. Peer be looking for as he performs the free gum and mouth 'inspections' at the Expo?

"Any bumps, lumps, bruises,

red areas, white areas, unhealed or sore areas," explains the dentist, who is a graduate of Randolph-Macon College and the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Dental Science.

"The screenings are for anyone," he adds. "But particularly older people and those who use tobacco products. People who have had a history of cancer or have areas in their mouth that haven't healed. Diabetics who have delayed healing, and just anybody concerned about their mouth and their health."

"With the intra-oral camera, I can see all sorts of things in the mouth," he continues, discussing some of the advantages of bringing the special scope-like camera to the Expo. "It provides a clear picture of what's in your mouth and magnifies those details up to 20X."

In his dental practice, Dr. Peer uses the camera routinely to check dental work, identify a hidden cavity or get a clearer view of areas around the crown of a tooth. The monitor will also capture and print a picture of the area for him to study in his office.

Thankfully, Dr. Peer finds that most people who participate in the Expo screenings are cancer-free in the mouth area, but those who do have suspicious looking areas, will have the added opportunity of a "second opinion"

via the camera.

During the oral cancer screening, the dentist will be looking into "the lateral borrows of the tongue and for any abnormalities in the vestibules of the mouth."

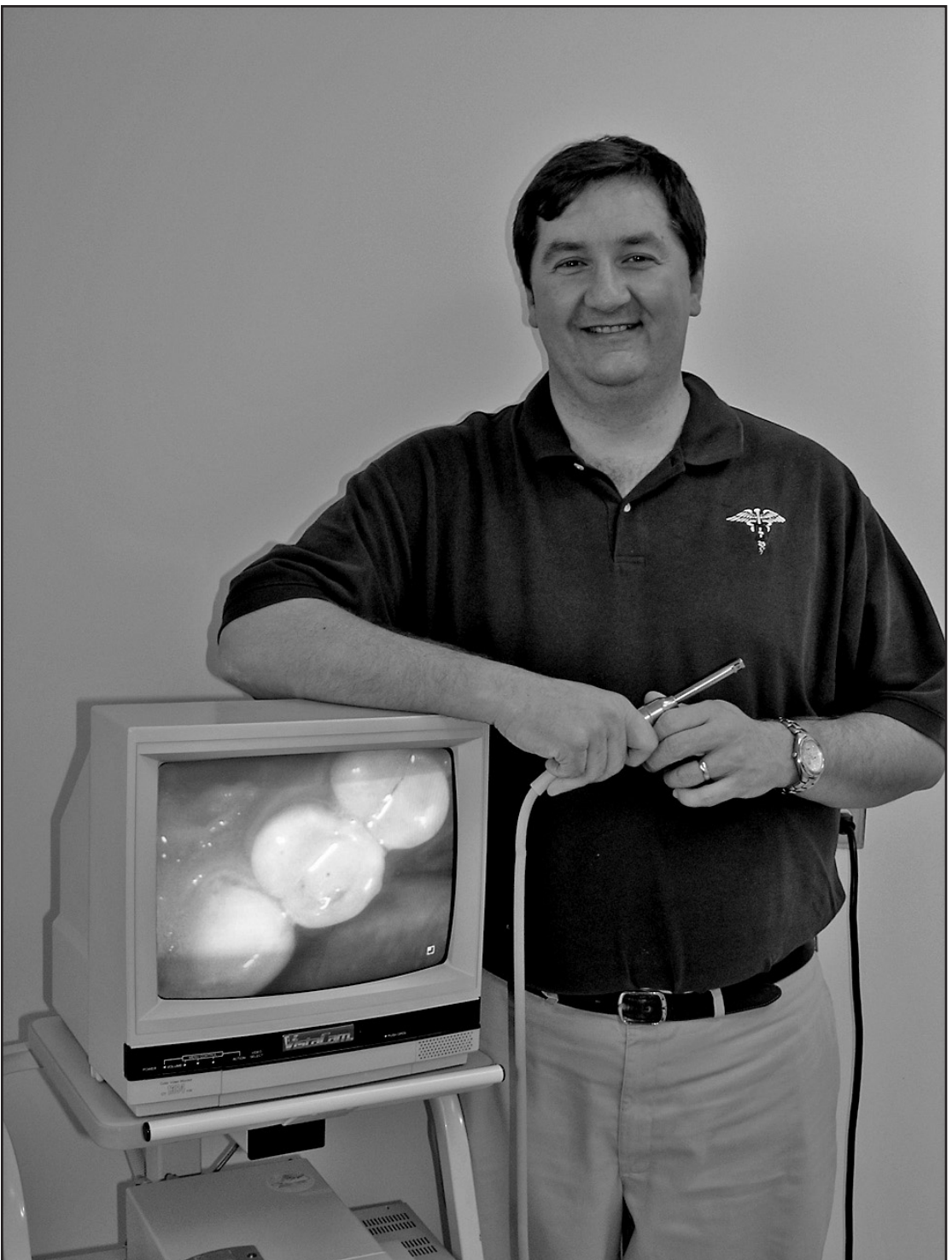
"And, I'll look for swollen lymph nodes and check for TMJ—for any popping, clicking or pain in the jaw joint."

Dr. Peer, whose practice is located on Hamilton Boulevard, adds that it is especially important for people who chew tobacco, to watch out for red or white spots or sore places in their mouths.

"People who use chewing tobacco or smoke are just more prone to cancers in mouth," he says. "When tobacco is used in the mouth, it will change the tissues."

The opportunity to find out that you don't have any abnormalities in your mouth is worth the trip to the local high school on Sunday, February 26. And for those who do have suspicious areas, Dr. Peer will make suggestions for follow-up.

For more information about other free screenings being offered at the Healthy Living Expo, Sunday, February 26, 2 to 4 p.m., at Halifax County High School, call the Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation Center, 434-517-3846. The Expo is free to the public.



DENTIST TO USE CAMERA IN FREE SCREENINGS—Dr. Michael Peer is shown beside an intra-oral camera and monitor he will be using during his oral cancer screening Sunday, February 26, when Halifax Regional presents its annual Healthy Living Expo from 2 to 4 p.m., at Halifax County High School. During the free screenings, Dr. Peer will be looking for unusual red or white areas and sore places in the mouth that may indicate cancer and will also check for TMJ problems.