



Proclamation

By the Governor of Alabama

WHEREAS, oropharyngeal cancers are those confined to the base of the tongue, the soft palate, tonsils and the back of the throat. The American Cancer Society estimates 60,480 people will develop oral cavity or oropharyngeal cancer this year, and 13,150 people will die from these cancers; and

WHEREAS, symptoms of oral cancer include persistent hoarseness or sore throat, earaches or enlarged lymph nodes of the neck, difficulty swallowing and unexplained weight loss. The mouth may have unusual sores, swelling and red or white lesions; and

WHEREAS, factors which can increase the risk of oral cancer include any form of tobacco use, including cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco and snuff. Other contributing factors may be alcohol consumption, whether moderate or heavy, prolonged sun exposure to lips, a weakened immune system, and a risk factor which has risen over the past two decades, oropharyngeal cancer related to the human papilloma virus (HPV); and

WHEREAS, an HPV vaccine was developed to prevent cervical and other cancers of the reproductive system, and observational studies by the American Dental Association Council on Scientific Affairs find that HPV vaccination is associated with a greater than 90 percent reduction in oral HPV infection; and

WHEREAS, Alabama ranks among the worst in the U.S. for tobacco use: 14 percent of Alabama adults and 5.7 percent of teens smoke cigarettes, 9.9 percent of adults and 17.5 percent of teens use e-cigarettes or vape, and approximately 5 percent of Alabama adults and an estimated 4 percent of teens use smokeless tobacco; and

WHEREAS, regular oral cancer examinations performed by an oral health professional remain the most effective method of detecting oral cancer in its early stages, and when detected and treated early, treatment-related health problems are reduced and survival rates may improve:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kay Ivey, Governor of Alabama, do hereby proclaim April 2026, as

Oral Cancer Awareness Month

in the state of Alabama.



Given Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the Office of the Governor at the State Capitol in the City of Montgomery on the 30th day of March 2026.

Kay Ivey

Kay Ivey, Governor