

Betel nut & oral cancer

What is betel nut?

Betel nut, also known as areca nut, is the seed of the fruit areca palm.

Chewing betel nut is a common cultural and social practice in Asia and the Pacific.

It is a highly addictive substance.



What are betel nut products?

Betel nut products may be

- ① self-prepared with betel leaf and tobacco, or
- ② commercially prepared in tins or sachets (known as paan masala/supari, gutka, bin lang, puwak, and buai/daka.)



Frequent use of betel nuts and betel nut products over time increases the risk of oral cancer.



Signs & symptoms of oral cancer

Any symptom **more than 3 weeks**:

- A red, white, or black patch in the mouth
- A lump in the mouth, neck, or face
- An ulcer (a break on surface lining)
- Any abnormality that bleeds easily when touched
- Pain or difficulty swallowing, speaking, chewing, or moving the jaw or tongue
- Soreness in the throat or mouth
- Numbness in the mouth or face



How can I reduce my risk of oral cancer and improve my oral health?



Avoid using betel nuts and betel nut products



Avoid smoking, vaping and using tobacco products



Limit alcohol intake



Brush teeth twice a day using a soft toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste, and floss daily



Get regular dental checks every 6 to 12 months

More information

Scan the code to view the brochure



Accessing dental care

Find a public dental clinic at: www.dhsv.org.au

Find a private dental clinic at: www.ada.org.au/Find-a-Dentist



Cancer Council

Free & confidential cancer information and support

Call 13 11 20

Or visit cancer.org.au/support-and-services