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Rising Number of College Students Smoking Hookah Raises Concern for Oral Cancer, Advises ENT and Allergy Associates

WESTCHESTER, N.Y.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Hookah smoking, where specially made flavored tobacco is heated, passed through water and drawn through a rubber pipe, has been around for centuries. According to a recent [study](#) conducted at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, however, these days hookah use is on the rise among college-age Americans. In fact, one in three college students has smoked a hookah at some point. In response to this alarming trend, the largest ear, nose, throat, allergy and audiology practice in the tri-state area, [ENT and Allergy Associates, LLP \(ENTA\)](#), which is highly involved with the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout, is calling for increased public awareness about the risks associated with hookah smoking. ENTA stresses the importance of quitting this unhealthy habit and provides tips on what young people can do to help decrease their chances of developing oral cancer.

"Young people need to be made aware of the negative impact of hookah smoking on their health, including the increased risk for developing oral cancer," explains Michael Bergstein, M.D., FACS, of the ENTA office in Sleepy Hollow, N.Y. "A typical hookah session can last up to one hour, with smokers taking long, deep breaths, so that the smoke inhaled can equal 100 cigarettes or more, according to a 2005 [study](#) by the World Health Organization. Therefore, it is critical that hookah smokers stop immediately and practice preventive measures against oral cancer."

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Individuals should routinely perform simple oral self-exams of their mouth in order to help detect early changes before they become harmful. Most oral cancers start as a very small white or red spot -- typically the size of a sesame seed. Everyday trauma, such as cheek biting, a sharp tooth or a pizza burn causes the majority of these spots in the mouth. Unhealthy habits, such as excessive alcohol intake and/or smoking, put individuals at greater risk for oral cancer, so changes in the mouth have a greater likelihood of showing the first signs of an oral cancer.

George Pazos, M.D., of the ENTA office in Yorktown, N.Y., adds, "Because of its fruity flavor, many young people forget that hookah smoke contains high levels of tar, carbon monoxide and cancer-causing chemicals. In addition to oral cancer, smokers are also at risk for developing lung cancer and heart disease. It is critical that the younger generation fully understands that they are putting their health and well-being at risk when they foolishly decide to smoke a hookah."

If a spot is found in the mouth, it should be brought to the attention of an ear, nose and throat specialist who can perform a quick and painless "BrushTest" to help rule out the chance that the oral spot contains still-harmless but precancerous cells.

About ENT and Allergy Associates

Each of ENT and Allergy Associates' 36 clinical locations provides access to a full complement of services, including General Adult and Pediatric ENT, Voice and Swallowing, Facial Plastics and Reconstructive Surgery, Disorders of the Inner Ear and Dizziness, Asthma, Clinical Immunology, Diagnostic Audiology, Hearing Aid dispensing, Sleep and CT services. Visit www.entandallergy.com for more information. The practice has a clinical alliance with The Mount Sinai Hospital for the treatment

of diseases of the head and neck and a partnership with the American Cancer Society to educate and treat patients with smoking disorders and cancer. The Practice has also expanded its clinical capabilities to include advanced Immunodeficiency trials.

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