

Oral Cancer Test Detects Over 2,500 Mouth Cancers or Precancers in Last 16 Months; New Data Confirms Dentists Should Expect to See Two Testable Lesions Each Week

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MELVILLE, N.Y., Aug 8, 2002 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Sullivan-Schein Dental, the U.S. Dental Business of Henry Schein, Inc. (Nasdaq:HSIC), announced today that OralCDx(R), a painless, early oral cancer detection test exclusively distributed by the Company in the U.S., is credited with identifying more than 2,500 precancerous or cancerous lesions during the past 16 months, according to CDx Laboratories, developers of OralCDx.

Many of these cancers presented as benign-appearing spots or sores in the mouth have been traditionally overlooked or "watched" before this test became available.

New evidence recently published in the Journal of the American Dental Association (Christian DC. J Am Dent Assoc 2002; 133: 357-62) confirms that, upon careful examination, dentists should expect to see at least two benign-appearing lesions that should be tested each week even in low-risk patients.

Oral cancer results in more deaths nationwide than either melanoma (skin cancer) or cervical cancer, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Approximately one-half of all patients diagnosed with oral cancer survive more than five years following the diagnosis. However, when detected early, the disease is often curable.

"I tested a white, very small lesion in one of my patients, a 20-year non-smoker, who came in for a cleaning," said Craig Steichen, DDS, of Albuquerque, N.M. "It turned out to be an early stage squamous cell carcinoma. This was one of those lesions that, without this test, would have gone undiagnosed until the cancer was more advanced. The OralCDx test I performed probably saved this patient's life."

OralCDx is a computer-assisted brush biopsy test that can determine if oral lesions contain potentially dangerous precancerous or cancerous cells. The general dentist or dental specialist performs the brush biopsy in minutes during a routine office visit. The procedure, meant for testing the benign-appearing spots or sores that are commonly seen in the mouth, is virtually painless, and patients require no anesthesia. If a brush biopsy specimen proves to be suspicious, a traditional incisional biopsy is then performed to give a definitive diagnosis.

Oral cancer affects some 30,000 Americans each year, including more than 20,000 men, according to the American Cancer Society. Although tobacco users are at higher risk for developing oral cancer, more than 25 percent of oral cancer victims do not smoke and have no other risk factors. In its earliest, most treatable stages, oral cancer generally causes no pain or discomfort and may be difficult to diagnose visually. Precancerous and cancerous spots or sores are virtually indistinguishable from benign spots or sores that can form in the mouth.

"Unlike other cancers, the mortality rate for oral cancer hasn't changed in more than 40 years," said Dore Eisen, MD, DDS, Medical Director of CDx Laboratories, providers of the OralCDx test. "Routine use of the OralCDx test, even in low-risk patients, will allow dental professionals to find the disease early and make progress in decreasing the mortality rate. Early detection will also help many people avoid the devastating effects of extensive surgery, which often is needed for oral cancers detected in late stages."

"At Sullivan-Schein Dental, we see Oral CDx as an opportunity to do well by doing good," said Jim Breslawski, President of Sullivan-Schein Dental. "We have supported the product to help ensure that our customers can perform the highest quality dentistry and be of the greatest aid to their patients. The fact that it has been instrumental in detecting 2,500 precancerous or cancerous lesions during the past 16 months is extremely gratifying."

OralCDx was developed by CDx Laboratories, and carries the ADA Seal of Acceptance. In the last 16 months, general dentists and dental specialists around the country have performed more than 50,000 OralCDx tests. The test has been commercially available since October 1999. For more information, visit www.oralcdx.com, or dentists can call 1-800-560-4467.

About CDx Laboratories

CDx Laboratories is a medical technology and biotechnology company dedicated to the detection of cancer at its earliest most curable stage through its specialty laboratory testing of lesions observed in the oral cavity, nasopharynx, hypopharynx, pharynx, trachea and esophagus.

About Henry Schein, Inc.

Henry Schein is the largest distributor of healthcare products and services to office-based healthcare practitioners in the combined North American and European markets. Recognized for its excellent customer service and low prices, the Company serves more than 400,000 customers worldwide, including dental practices and laboratories, physician practices and veterinary clinics, as well as government and other institutions.

The Company operates its four business groups - Dental, Medical, International and Technology - through a centralized and automated distribution network, which provides customers in more than 125 countries with a comprehensive selection of over 80,000 national and Henry Schein private-brand products. Henry Schein also offers a wide range of innovative value-added practice solutions, including such leading practice management software systems as DENTRIX(R) and Easy Dental(R), for dental practices, and AVImark(R) for veterinary clinics, which are installed in over 44,000 practices; and Aruba(R), Henry Schein's electronic catalog and ordering system.

Headquartered in Melville, New York, Henry Schein employs over 6,700 people in 16 countries. The Company's 2001 sales reached a record \$2.6 billion. For more information, visit the Henry Schein Web site at www.henryschein.com.

CONTACT:

Henry Schein, Inc., Melville
Steven Paladino, 631/843-5500
or

Susan Vassallo, 631/843-5562
svassa@henryschein.com

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