

The Effects of Oral Cancer in the CNMI

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EN101-06

Introduction:

In the CNMI the culture is what many indigenous people pride themselves in. A culture diverse in its own unique way, with honor and legacy. There are many things that our culture has brought to the people, like change, diversity, and bad habits, such as Betel nut chewing. This has been a part of the indigenous people for many years because of the plant itself being a native plant to the CNMI. What was not introduced was the consequences many people face nowadays called oral cancer. It has affected our people for so many year that at one point in time the topic was considered taboo to talk about, to now where it is widely informational. Oral cancer stems from many different factors, what I will introduce is betel quid chewing being a form of reason for oral cancer in the CNMI.

Literature Review:

A progressive amount of oral and mouth cancer patients are starting to climb in statistical data and mainly we find these patients have added of tobacco and many other harmful factors. Like in any addiction case, people build a tolerance. So, like betel nut mixed with nicotine, over a long period of time, they build a tolerance. Chewing tobacco with betel nut becomes not enough so the people find different ways.

Studies show that CNMI chewers mix betel nut with tobacco as well as mint gum, Vicks, and lime. All these factors enhance oral cancer. This is a huge debate because many people believe that chewing tobacco is in our culture, and maybe so, but it did not come with all these other factors. The youth have been greatly affected by this custom and are now taking in what the elders do. The longer you chew the more you built your tolerance level of consuming this high. All these key factors lead to one horrible cause, Oral cancer. Any type of cancer is bad,

whatever stage you may be in. But in the CNMI we see a lot more cases of oral cancer than we want to believe. And a lot of the times they come from mid-30's to 40's patients. This is because of starting at a very young age. One of the main ways I was able to gather my information was to look into the "international Agency for Cancer Research". This company has gathered the information much needed to analyze what types of betel quids are out there. The statistics to who uses betel nut are commonly found in many parts of Asia. I have gathered a way to seek answers to my research questions and it is mainly through the internet. For the next few weeks I will get in touch with different scholastic research options. First I will go through the school library and see if we have any information on Oral cancer in the CNMI through the years. Through that I will be able to find resources and references to go to in order to extract more data. In time I will be able to conduct an interview with the CNMI only Cancer Registrar stationed at CHCC. Because this person will need to gather the information first it will take a 1 week notice from me. This time schedule will prepare me to gather the questions I would like to ask so I can use my interview as a source of data.

The CNMI finds different ways to prevent oral cancer in the CNMI, through outreach and statistical data. The Department of Public Health is a big asset in promoting awareness to oral cancer. Through outreach programs and surveys there is a much more reliable sense of this disease here in the CNMI. CCA is under the Department of Public Health having been conducting different methods of spreading awareness to our island. A way that this program achieves their goals is by going to different schools and educating the youth. According to Juan Babauta of CCA they initiated presentations through Tanapag elementary to kick start their awareness project. In 2014 according to Saipan tribune 81 people of the community took

advantage of free oral cancer screening. Lauri Ogumoro states, “That the outstanding partnership and commitment of our dental clinics, to provide free screening and we are pleased of the response and action of the community”. This is why I believe that finding out more about betel quid and their harmful carcinogens is important. It is to keep our community safe and informed to prevent any more harmful effects to our people.

Primary Questions :

1. Do you chew betel-nut?
2. What do you think is the main cause of oral cancer?
3. Why do you think people chew betel-nut?
4. Do you think people in the CNMI are educated about oral cancer?
5. Do you know what oral cancer is? And what is it?
6. What age do you think people start chewing?
7. What do you think we should do as a community to prevent oral cancer?
8. Do you believe that raising up the prices for betel-nut and tobacco will lower the percentage of oral cancer?
9. What percentage of the population in the CNMI do you believe are betel-nut chewers?
10. Male or female, which do you think is most affected with oral cancer?

Secondary Questions

1. What are the symptoms/signs that you look for when you are screening for oral cancer?
2. If the exam is suspicious for cancer, what types of treatment or procedure is available on island for the patient to avail of for immediate care?

3. In your experience, what stages is the cancer usually found? And what is the survival rate for the patient?
4. Can a non-betel-nut chewer have oral cancer?
5. Can you tell me which race/ethnicity you have had to treat for oral cancer?
6. In your opinion, is betel-nut chewing with or without the added ingredients (for example: lime, leaf, tobacco) a cultural practice?
7. What is oral cancer?
8. At what age do you think people begin chewing?
9. Male or female, which do you think is most affected with oral cancer?

Methodology:

In part of gathering the data needed for the final essay, the researcher took a bunch of steps that will help in achieving this information. As part of this essay they will introduce the steps taken from creating a survey, to analyzing where the factors meet. In order for the researchers essay to not only be a success, but factual evidence as well they needed to contribute enough time to come up with questions that will benefit my purposes, but contradict them as well. This type of survey will help the researcher to view the different ways people feel about their topic.

So as stated, the first step taken was to create a survey that counteracts with a variety of diverse people. In order to do so the researcher came up with questions that related to a broad audience for the people of the CNMI. In doing so, the essay will not only be about proposing that what the researcher believes to be true, but also to give solid information for backing. Now that step 1 has been introduced the researcher needed to move on to step 2, as part of step 2 in order

to get the survey out they need to find a group of individuals to intrust in that can take the survey and give credible answers. Immediately following the surveyors it is good to find out a brief background of the people answering the survey. This way the researcher can gather the correct information to use and why their answers came up that way. Step 2 is sort of a critical way in the process essay because the people answering will reflect on the data collected. Moving on to step 3; step 3 focuses on the ways the data will be analyzed. As part of the process the researcher needs to find the information needed for my purpose, but they cannot solely focus on the answers they want but also the contributing counterpart. Step 3 will help the researcher to fix whatever discrepancies they may have for their essay. Gathering the data takes part in both step 3 and 4. In step 4 there is more to the collection. This step will gather all the data in one and then get the percentages to make the essay more formal. Having a more statistical essay can sometimes be too much for a short essay, so getting percentages limits a reader's time away from the paper. Lastly all that needs to be done is to apply this information to the essay.

The importance of this essay is to have a breakdown of what ways the researcher took to gather their data. This is highly important from a readers perspective, because it allows for the reader to be engaged in the process and clarifies any misconceptions of how the data was gathered. With that the researcher will conclude the essay to better understand how they utilized their time in gathering the much needed data, and to also introduce the reason for why it is important.

ANALYSIS

There were two main ways the researcher did to collect his data, the first way was through a survey given out to students who attended NMC. On one question in the survey the

researcher asked if they think that the people of the CNMI was educated about oral cancer. It shocked him because everybody who took the survey all said that people in the CNMI are barely educated on oral cancer, and what betel nut can do to you. It's so hard to educate people about oral cancer because on another question in the survey it asked people, why do you think people chew? And majority of the people all answered because its a cultural thing. The second way that the researcher collected his data was by sending out letters to doctors, physicians, and clinics asking if they could schedule an interview with them. There was a total of three experts who contacted him and agreed to meet up and answer any questions. One of the questions the researcher asked the experts was "do you believe that areca/betel nut is a direct factor of oral cancer?" they all believed that in the CNMI chewing betel nut is a direct factor of oral cancer. They said that because the people of the CNMI believes that its the chamorro/carolinian culture, and others are just scared to be told that they do have oral cancer. So that's why people are not getting checked or listens to the presentations about oral cancer. The researcher also asked "as a community what could we do to decrease the rate of oral cancer?". They said "they should educate not only children or teenagers but also the adults, because they are the role models to their kids and also grandkids."