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Editorial

With more than 10 million new cases and 6 million deaths each year worldwide, Cancer stands as one of the most dreadful diseases in terms of mortality and morbidity in current scenario. Half of the total cancer cases in the world occur in developing countries and half of that in India.

According to WHO, 43% of oral cancer is due to tobacco use, unhealthy diets, alcohol consumption, inactive lifestyles and also from viral infections. Amongst these, tobacco abuse is still the most avoidable cause of cancer. Not only is the cancer incidence linked to etiologies and its prognosis on staging, but we should also bear in mind that it is also linked to the socioeconomic development of the country as well. People of low strata in our society, do not get access to good health services and health education that could empower them to make decisions to protect and improve their own health.

Being a multifactorial disease, single agent detection for causation of cancer or precancer is difficult to estimate. Whereas the synergism of alcohol consumption with tobacco, both in form of smoking and smokeless, causes 80% of oral

and oropharyngeal cancer, fresh fruits and vegetables provide antioxidants that reduce the risk by one quarter.

Primary prevention in terms of early detection benefits the patients. Similarly early cessation of alcohol and tobacco consumption as a primary prevention method has a long way in terms of its effect in preventing cancer. More research on natural history of the disease, specially knowing which pre-cancerous lesions has higher propensity to develop into cancer, would help to develop screening programmes tailored more to the individual disorders. Development of tumour markers with high sensitivity and specificity could assist in the detection of patients and lesions at risk.

Recently International Oral Precancer & Cancer Conference was organized by the Craniofacial Research Foundation and the Department of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery and this issue of the journal has printed those abstracts.

I extend my best wishes for the Journal.

A.P. Tikku

Dean, Faculty of Dental Sciences,
Department of Conservative Dentistry & Endodontics,
King George's Medical University, Lucknow,
Uttar Pradesh, India
E-mail address: crown_tikku@yahoo.com

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jobcr.2014.03.001>

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