# Oral Rinse May Hold Key to Early Detection of Stomach Cancer, Study Finds



Researchers at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson School of Medicine in New Jersey have discovered that early signs of stomach cancer can potentially be detected years before symptoms manifest using an oral rinse, according to a new study. The study utilized a "swish and spit" technique to analyze bacterial changes in the mouths of people who later developed the disease. Stomach cancer, which is the fourth leading cause of cancer deaths globally, often goes undiagnosed until it progresses due to its symptom overlap with less serious conditions.

The research involved collecting mouth bacteria samples from 98 patients scheduled for endoscopy, including 30 stomach cancer patients, 30 individuals with precancerous stomach conditions, and 38 healthy control subjects. Significant differences were found between the microbiomes of healthy individuals and those of cancerous and precancerous patients. Specifically, increases in bacteria such as rothia, leptotrichia, and lactobacillus were observed in patients with gastric cancer.

This discovery suggests that a simple oral rinse could potentially serve as a screening tool for identifying individuals at a higher risk of stomach cancer, facilitating earlier diagnosis and intervention. Currently, no formal screening guidelines for stomach cancer exist in the United States. Each year, approximately 11,130 deaths in the U.S. are attributed to stomach tumors.