



Mouth Cancer  
**FOUNDATION**  
[www.mouthcancerfoundation.org](http://www.mouthcancerfoundation.org)

**MEDIA ALERT: HASTINGS HALF MARATHON RUNNER HELPS TO SAVE LIVES!**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Interviewee:** Founder of the Mouth Cancer Foundation Dr Vinod Joshi  
Half marathon runner Sam Harrison  
Mouth cancer survivor Michelle Morton

*To set up an interview please call Media Ambitions on 0208 940 2222.*

Sam Harrison from Hastings knows first hand the devastating effect Mouth Cancer can have after seeing his friend Michelle Morton suffer with the shocking cancer killer last year. Now Sam is competing in the Hastings half marathon to raise money and awareness of Mouth Cancer and its symptoms.

Sam, 24, who works in an insurance office in Hastings was spurred on to take up the Hastings half marathon challenge after seeing the pain and suffering Michelle went through. Sam says "I really like running, I'd much rather run for a good cause and I decided the Mouth Cancer Foundation would be the best one as the disease affected someone I know. Michelle survived mouth cancer last year but her treatment was long and intensive and it affected me profoundly. The Hastings half marathon has been voted the best half marathon in the UK, it's a really difficult course because it's so hilly and I don't do things by halves so I'm really looking forward to it!"

Sam's friend, Michelle, was diagnosed with Nasopharyngeal Carcinoma in June 2006 at 22 years old. Michelle was treated at The Sussex Cancer Centre & the Royal Sussex hospital in Brighton. During her treatment Michelle dropped to 6stone 10lb, and was vomiting every day for about 2 to 3months. After a gruelling recovery Michelle is now happy, health and cancer free.

The founder of the Mouth Cancer Foundation Dr Joshi said that "Sam is an inspiration to many people, taking part in the half marathon and raising money helps to raise awareness of Mouth Cancer and its symptoms which is so important".

Every 5 hours someone will die from Mouth Cancer. Mouth cancers have a higher proportion of deaths per number of cases than breast cancer, cervical cancer or skin melanoma. In the

UK, there has been a 19% increase in cases from 3,673 in 1995 to 4,405 in 2002 and 13,000 people in the UK are currently living in the shadow of this debilitating disease. The mortality rate from mouth cancer is just over 50% due to late detection. These are the shocking facts from the Mouth Cancer Foundation.

According to the Founder of the Mouth Cancer Foundation Dr Vinod Joshi "25% of mouth cancer cases are not associated with any known risk factor, hence the need for vigilance. If you notice a lump in your mouth that wasn't there before or a mouth ulcer which lasts for more than 3 weeks, you should see a dentist or doctor immediately."

The Hastings half marathon takes place on Sunday March 16<sup>th</sup> 2008. Sam has also set up a page for people wishing to donate money [www.justgiving.com/samharrison1](http://www.justgiving.com/samharrison1)

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### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

The Mouth Cancer Foundation is a registered charity no. 1109298.

Cancer can occur in any part of the mouth, tongue, lips, throat, salivary glands, pharynx, larynx, sinus, and other sites located in the head and neck area. In its very early stages, Mouth Cancer can be almost invisible making it easy to ignore.

Symptoms include:

1. A sore or ulcer in the mouth that does not heal within 3 weeks
2. A lump or overgrowth of tissue anywhere in the mouth
3. A white or red patch on the gums, tongue, or lining of the mouth
4. Difficulty in swallowing, chewing or moving the jaw or tongue
5. Numbness of the tongue or other area of the mouth
6. A feeling that something is caught in the throat
7. A chronic sore throat or hoarseness that persists more than 6 weeks
8. Swelling of the jaw that causes dentures to fit poorly or become uncomfortable
9. Neck swelling present for more than 3 weeks
10. Unexplained tooth mobility persisting for more than 3 weeks

More information about Mouth Cancer is available at the Mouth Cancer Foundation web site [www.mouthcancerfoundation.org](http://www.mouthcancerfoundation.org) or by emailing [info@mouthcancerfoundation.org](mailto:info@mouthcancerfoundation.org)

