



Mouth Cancer Walk  
www.mouthcancerwalk.org



**MEDIA ALERT - STEP OUT AND SAVE LIVES IN 2007**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Interviews Available:** Founder of the Mouth Cancer Foundation Dr Vinod Joshi

**Photos Available:** Double Commonwealth Gold and Olympic Swimming Champion Sharron Davies MBE

*To set up an interview please call Media Ambitions on 020 7482 3600.*

- **Mouth Cancer kills 1 in 2 people who are diagnosed due to late detection.**
- **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.**

Double Commonwealth Gold and Olympic Swimming Champion, Sharron Davies MBE, announces her support for the Mouth Cancer Foundation's second **Mouth Cancer Awareness Walk 2007** sponsored by Merck Serono to help raise the profile of this lesser known cancer killer.

The **FREE** 10km sponsored walk takes place at 13:00 (participants should arrive at 12:00 noon) on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2007 in London's Hyde Park. The walk is the first of a series of awareness raising initiatives in the run up to Mouth Cancer Awareness Week which takes place from 11<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

People from all across the UK will step out to spread the word about this deadly disease in a bid to warn the world that Mouth Cancer can strike anybody at anytime. Double Commonwealth Gold and Olympic Swimming Champion Sharron Davies MBE says "I would encourage everyone to join in the FREE Mouth Cancer Awareness Walk to help raise awareness for Mouth Cancer. Mouth cancers can be almost invisible making it easy to ignore. The chance of survival is greatly improved if the cancer is detected early and rapidly treated. That is why it is crucial for the public to become more aware of the symptoms of this debilitating disease. By taking part in the Mouth Cancer Awareness Walk you will be literally saving lives".

The Mouth Cancer Foundation's very own Clare Jones fell victim to tongue cancer which eventually spread to her bones at the age of just 23 years old in April. Clare, who was working in Swansea, was a student at Loughborough University when she was first diagnosed

in February 2003. 5 months later she became a member of the Mouth Cancer Foundation's Forum after an operation to remove the right side of her tongue, reconstruction with a flap from her right forearm and a neck dissection. Clare joined the Mouth Cancer Foundation initially to find out how others coped. In Clare's words "I would like to discuss my feelings with people who have experienced the same operation as myself".

In June 2005 Clare graduated from Loughborough with a first in Information Management and Business Studies and got a job at the Swansea NHS Trust. Within 12 months Clare had secondary bone cancer and bravely went through the treatments offered. It was a difficult time for her and she was very very scared. She worried about the effects of chemo and fertility but finished her chemotherapy and was looking forward to a better 2007. Unfortunately, the MRI scans showed no change in the size of her cancer, which eventually spread to her brain and Clare passed away peacefully with her family and boyfriend, Dan with her.

Clare will always be a valued member of the Mouth Cancer Foundation and was happy for her story to be heard to educate and inform others about Mouth Cancer.

According to the Founder of the Mouth Cancer Foundation Dr Vinod Joshi "As in Clare's case 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 World Health Organization is endorsing the Mouth Cancer Foundation 10K walking event. Dr. P.E Petersen of the Oral Health Programme, Chronic Diseases and Health Promotion says "Mouth Cancer Awareness Week is a very important initiative and the 10 K sponsored walking event is a great way to raise the profile of Mouth Cancer. The prevention of oral cancer is a priority action area of the World Health Organisation/Oral Health Programme. I look forward to expanding the collaboration between the Mouth Cancer Foundation and the World Health Organisation/Oral Health Programme for effective control and prevention of oral cancer in the future".

Everyone is invited to join the free 10km sponsored Mouth Cancer Walk. This is not a race and everyone taking part is a winner in raising awareness of mouth cancer and will receive a goodie bag with refreshments for the Walk as well as other cool freebies. There will be prizes available for top individual and team fundraisers as well as top individual and team awareness raisers. Costumes are invited if you're feeling brave!

On the day there is the opportunity to receive a free screening in a mobile dental unit courtesy of the Department of Community and Special Care Dentistry of Kings College London Dental Institute and the Oral Medicine Department of the Eastman Dental Institute who are providing manpower.

Walking is fun, free, easy, burns calories and saves lives! Surprisingly, most of the population in the UK need to get out and walk more. Walking is excellent exercise in the fight against cancer.

-END-

To take part in the FREE MOUTH CANCER AWARENESS WALK 2007 visit [www.mouthcancerwalk.org](http://www.mouthcancerwalk.org)

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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 or jaws
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 looseness of teeth persisting for more than 3 weeks
11. Swelling causing obstruction of the nose, particularly if associated with bleeding or pus discharge

Mouth Cancer Awareness Week, held in November each year, is co-ordinated by the British Dental Health Foundation (BDHF), and supported by the Mouth Cancer Foundation and a wide range of leading national health organisations. These include the Mouth Cancer Foundation, Cancer Research UK, Denplan, Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), British Dental Association (BDA), British Association of Head and Neck Oncologists (BAHNO), British Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (BAOMS), the health departments of the four UK countries, GKT, Pharmacy Health Link, QUIT and Scope.

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)

Event Sponsors are as follows:



Merck is a global pharmaceutical and chemical company with sales of EUR 6.3 billion in 2006, a history that began in 1668, and a future shaped about 35,214 employees (including Merck Serono) in 63 countries. Its success is characterized by innovations from entrepreneurial employees. Merck's operating activities come under the umbrella of Merck KGaA, in which the Merck family holds an approximately 70% interest and free shareholders own the remaining approximately 30%. In 1917 the U.S. subsidiary Merck & Co. was expropriated and has been an independent company ever since.

#### **Biotene**



Biotene's range of oral care products has been designed to help reduce the symptoms of Dry Mouth resulting from the use of strong medications and cancer treatments. Biotene's natural antibacterial enzyme system helps promote healing of sore and tender mouth tissues, bleeding gums, gingivitis and inhibits the growth of harmful odour-causing bacteria. The gentle formulations provide long lasting moisture essential for oral comfort.

#### **Eastman Dental Institute and Hospital, London**



The **Eastman Dental Institute and Hospital, London**, is the largest postgraduate dental academic centre in Europe, the first dental school to receive the Queens Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education, and is currently involved in the education and training of some 13,000 dentists and dental care professionals, internationally-renowned clinical and translational research, and quality specialist clinical care.

#### **Kings Dental Institute, London**



**King's College London Dental Institute** based at Guy's, College and St Thomas' Hospitals is the largest school of dentistry in the UK.