

Oral Cancer mortality rate likely to be reduced

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Kuwait-based Virtus Health Services India (VHSI) entered India only in the year 2013 is already making its presence felt. VHSI has launched O-Test in India, which is a non-invasive, highly affordable and easily accessible to all sections of the society. The O-test is supported by Virtus's highly advanced automated screening software. This software is designed by expert pathologists and applied to the entire process right from case history to medical examination and microscopic slide viewing, offers high accuracy and speed of results generation.

Seeing the potential in the Indian market, the firm has decided to launch the globally accepted O-Test. India accounts for 40 percent of oral cancer. As per a Deloitte report, the market stands at \$70 billion and is still expected to grow. The test is expected to reduce morbidity rate which is 23 percent at present in India.

Mr Sunil Ikhe, operations director and country head, VHSI, expressed that, "Virtus Health Services is devoted to empowering the Indian population with access to the best and latest global healthcare technologies for personal health." He further added, "The O-Test also addresses the cost affordability issue. The test is priced at Rs850. And our motto is to reach people where ever possible right from corporate campuses to housing societies. We have also done a pilot run of the project with key corporate like Edelweiss."

Apart from the launch of the test, it also announced its collaboration with Cancer Aid society to offer corporate to be part of this initiative and join hands in early detection of oral cancer as a CSR initiative. Mr O P Berry, member and director general, Cancer Aid Society, said that, "Oral cancer is easily detected. As an NGO committed to cancer control, we are pleased to lend our support to this initiative and through this test we hope that people are motivated to get tested at the earliest." On a positive note, he quoted, "Cancer means can survive if detected early."

Commenting on the need for early detection in India, Dr Dinesh Rajput, associate professor, department of oral pathology and microbiology, Yahwantrao Chavan Memorial Medial and Rural Development Foundation's Dental College and Hospital, said that, "The survival rate is less than 50 percent despite so many technological advances in the treatment. However if detected early, survival rate can be picked up by 80 percent. Also it's more prevalent in middle and lower strata. So in terms of affordability for them this test comes at the best price."

Also they have come up with an innovative idea of making this test available as gift card for purchase at chemists across

Mumbai.