

# DENTAL HYGIENISTS: PRIMARY HEALTH-CARE PROFESSIONALS.

Self-confidence, self-image, self-esteem—so much is wrapped up in the appearance and condition of our teeth, our mouths and our smiles. But did you know that hidden problems with your overall health can often be detected first in your mouth?

## GOOD OVERALL HEALTH STARTS IN YOUR MOUTH

Increasingly, research is showing that there is a direct link between oral health and your general health and well-being. In fact, periodontal disease—disease of the gums and supporting bone—has been linked to a number of serious illnesses including lung disease, diabetes, heart disease and even preterm low birth weight babies.

Whether working in a dental office, a clinic, a hospital, a retirement home or in the community, your dental hygienist is a licensed oral health-care professional who is there every step of the way to help you ensure good oral health.

### PERIODONTAL DISEASE CAN BE PREVENTED AND CONTROLLED.

*Early detection is vital to your overall health and your dental hygienist can help.*

Call today to make an appointment.

Your chances of **cardiovascular disease** may be greater if you have **periodontal disease**.

# HOW CAN MY DENTAL HYGIENIST HELP ME?

Your dental hygienist can help by ensuring that you are taking good care of your gums and teeth.

That assistance may take many forms in both the clinical setting and in the community.

*They help in the dental hygiene clinical setting by*

- assessing your health history, examining your head and neck, checking your mouth, gums and teeth, and screening for oral cancer;
- developing a care plan with you that includes prevention and treatment therapies to achieve and maintain your best oral health;
- referring you to other health-care providers as required; and
- teaching you about mouth care.

*They help in the community by*

- teaching students or counselling families about oral health care;
- reviewing literature and conducting research;
- teaching long-term care staff about mouth care for their patients;
- manufacturing mouthguards and working with coaches, school staff and others to prevent sports and playground injuries;
- screening seniors for signs of oral cancer; and
- acting as health-care advocates on issues such as tobacco control.

No matter where the work is carried out, your dental hygienist is your partner in oral—and *overall*—health.

There is substantial evidence of a link between **diabetes** and **periodontal disease**.

# 5 EASY STEPS TO GOOD ORAL HEALTH

It takes just a few minutes a day to help ensure good oral health. Here are five things you can do to enjoy healthy gums and teeth.

## 1. BRUSH YOUR TEETH DAILY.

If you use a power toothbrush, choose one that offers rotation/oscillation action.

## 2. FLOSS BETWEEN YOUR TEETH TO REMOVE DENTAL PLAQUE DAILY.

You can use floss (on its own or in a holder or flosser), interdental brushes (for bridges and braces), picks or irrigators.

## 3. RINSE USING AN ANTISEPTIC MOUTHWASH.

This will help reduce the accumulation of dental plaque.

## 4. MAKE HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES.

Nutritional food choices low in sugar are good for your overall health *and* your oral health.

## 5. GET REGULAR PROFESSIONAL DENTAL HYGIENE CARE.

Your biggest weapon in the battle to maintain good oral health is a regular visit with your dental hygienist. Why not make an appointment today?

Scientific studies show a clear association between **periodontal disease** and **lung disease**.

# START TODAY!

Brush, floss, rinse, make healthy food choices and visit your dental hygienist. That may be all it takes to enjoy a lifetime of good oral health.

Why not take a minute *right now* to make an appointment to see your dental hygienist?

You'll have one more reason to smile.



THE CANADIAN DENTAL  
HYGIENISTS ASSOCIATION  
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DES HYGIÉNISTES DENTAIRES

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