



THE CANADIAN DENTAL  
HYGIENISTS ASSOCIATION  
L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE  
DES HYGIÉNISTES DENTAIRES



For immediate release (Disponible en français sur la demande)

## Media Release

### Dental Hygienists Promote A Healthy Diet for a Healthy Smile

March 25, 2013 (Ottawa, ON) – March is National Nutrition Month and the theme of Dietitians of Canada is “Best food forward: Plan Shop Cook Enjoy!” with a focus that healthy eating begins at the grocery store. Maintaining a balanced diet and proper nutrition is also championed by Canadian dental hygienists, as diet affects oral health in several ways.

Dental hygienists see first-hand how poor diet and nutrition can affect a client’s oral and overall health. Dental diseases related to diet include dental cavities or decay, weak enamel, dental erosion and periodontal disease. Dental hygienists want Canadians to be aware that what they eat has an impact on their oral health. “A balanced and nutritious diet is an important part of maintaining a healthy smile,” says Sandy Lawlor, president of the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA). “Eating well balanced meals is not only good for your overall general health, but for your oral health. With the right nutrients, your teeth and gums can become more resistant to oral diseases.”

Food and beverage choices play a role in the development of tooth decay. As soon as a few minutes after eating or drinking, bacteria begin creating acids that can break down the tooth’s outer surface by attacking the enamel. Dental hygienists encourage clients to make healthy food choices and to be aware of what they purchase at the store. One of the best ways to protect your oral health and your overall health is to eat a healthy diet and to limit between-meal snacks. “Dental hygienists work with their clients to keep the mouth and body healthy with preventive oral care treatment and nutrition counselling,” says Lawlor. “Working together with a dietitian and your dental hygienist can help you get on track with what foods you should choose more frequently and which foods should be reserved for special occasions.”

To keep your mouth and body healthy, follow these tips

- Make water your beverage of choice
- Mix up your diet and include foods from the four major food groups as recommended in Canada’s Food Guide.
- Limit snacking between meals
- Limit snacks and drinks that are high in sugar and starch
- Brush twice a day

- Floss daily
- Visit your dental hygienist for regular checkups and cleanings.

Serving the profession since 1963, CDHA is the collective national voice of more than 24,000 registered dental hygienists working in Canada, directly representing 16,500 individual members including dental hygienists and students. Dental hygiene is the 6th largest registered health profession in Canada with professionals working in a variety of settings, including independent practice, with people of all ages, addressing issues related to oral health. For more information on oral health or dental hygienists, visit: [www.cdha.ca](http://www.cdha.ca).

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