



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

For immediate release (Disponible en français sur la demande)

Media Release

Dental Hygienists Untangle the Floss Controversy

August 3, 2016 (Ottawa, ON) — As experts in oral health promotion and disease prevention, Canadian dental hygienists support the use of dental floss as well as other dental aids, such as power toothbrushes and interdental brushes, to remove food debris from all tooth surfaces. When food accumulates between teeth, it is metabolized by bacteria to produce plaque. Plaque causes both inflammation of the gums (gingivitis) and the demineralization of teeth, which leads to tooth decay.

It has been reported recently in the media that there is no strong evidence of flossing effectiveness. However, the research studies used to support this statement were carried out over a short time span—two to three months—which is insufficient to draw such conclusions. The Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) recommends that more comprehensive research be undertaken to determine the effects of flossing on oral health before changes are made to established daily oral hygiene routines. Until then, dental hygienists will continue to recommend flossing and other interdental cleaning methods as part of an individualized plan for home oral health care.

“Dental hygienists play a critical role in assessing their clients’ oral health and working with them to develop the most effective home care strategies to keep their mouths healthy and reduce the amount of disease-causing bacteria,” explains former CDHA president Mary Bertone. As primary health care providers, dental hygienists know that good oral health is essential to overall health and well-being. They are committed to reducing their clients’ risk of illness and disease by making use of every tool at their disposal. Visit your dental hygienist today to learn more about interdental cleaning.

Serving the profession since 1963, CDHA is the collective national voice of more than 28,495 registered dental hygienists working in Canada, directly representing 18,000 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 dental hygiene practice, with people of all ages, addressing issues related to oral health. For more information on oral health, visit: www.dentalhygienecanada.ca.

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