



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

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Media Release

Dental Hygienists Urge You to Commit to Good Oral Health in 2016

January 11, 2016 (Ottawa, ON) — The beginning of a new year is a perfect time to set new personal and professional goals. While many of us focus on self-improvement after the holidays, dental hygienists remind Canadians not to overlook oral health when making choices about improving overall physical and mental wellness.

“Good oral health is essential for overall health,” says Donna Scott, president of the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA). Research suggests that gum disease is a risk factor for serious life-threatening illnesses such as diabetes, lung and heart disease, and stroke. Scott adds, “Canadians are never too young or too old to embrace new dental hygiene habits. The whole family can commit to improved home oral health care in 2016 and discuss personalized strategies with their dental hygienist at their next visit.” In the meantime, here are some helpful tips to start the New Year:

Infants and Toddlers up to age 3: Parents or guardians should wipe their baby’s mouth and gums with a clean, wet cloth after feeding. Teach toddlers to hold a toothbrush, but brush for them twice a day using water (no toothpaste is necessary) once their first teeth appear.

Children ages 3–5: Help your children to brush their teeth for two minutes twice a day, using a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Show them how to brush every tooth surface and their tongue, and make sure that they spit out the toothpaste when they are done.

Children ages 6–12: Children should brush their teeth for two minutes twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and try to clean in between their teeth daily. Help them to make healthy food choices, avoiding sweets and sugars. Have them fitted for a sports mouthguard to be worn during athletic activity.

Teenagers and Adults: Brush teeth with fluoride toothpaste for two minutes at least twice a day (Remember: four minutes is less than 0.3% of your day!). Rinse with an antibacterial mouthwash and clean in between the teeth at least once a day. Eliminate tobacco use and eat nutritious foods that are low in sugar. Wear a sports mouthguard during athletic activity.

Seniors: Brush natural teeth with fluoride toothpaste for two minutes twice a day and clean in between the teeth at least once a day. Clean and soak dentures (full or partial) daily. Brush and massage the gums, either with a soft toothbrush or with a warm, damp cloth.

And of course, everyone from the age of one should visit a dental hygienist regularly to develop an individualized oral health care routine that will ensure a lifetime of optimum oral health.

Serving the profession since 1963, CDHA is the collective national voice of more than 26,800 registered dental hygienists working in Canada, directly representing 17,500 individual members including dental hygienists and students. Dental hygiene is the sixth 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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