



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

For immediate release (Disponible en français sur la demande)

## Media Release

### Diabetes and Dental Hygiene

November 11, 2016 (Ottawa, ON) – On November 14, Canadian dental hygienists will join more than 1 billion people worldwide in marking World Diabetes Day. As primary health care providers, dental hygienists are important members of the diabetes health care team.

According to the Canadian Diabetes Association, 11 million Canadians are living with diabetes or prediabetes. These individuals are particularly susceptible to oral health problems, such as dry mouth (which can cause soreness, ulcers, and tooth decay) and gum disease (gingivitis). Moreover, research now suggests that gingivitis, like all infections, may cause blood glucose levels to rise and make diabetes harder to control. As Gerry Cool, president of the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA), explains, “It is very important for people living with diabetes to practise good oral hygiene and visit their dental hygienist regularly for professional oral care.”

Dental hygienists strive to prevent oral diseases, but are equally committed to treating and controlling diseases if they do develop. Cool adds, “Dental hygienists check for early signs of gingivitis and periodontitis during regular dental hygiene visits and work with their clients to develop an oral hygiene plan to maintain good oral and overall health.” By reducing inflammation in the mouth, clients with diabetes are better able to regulate their blood glucose levels, thereby reducing their risk of potentially life-threatening complications from this serious disease.

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](http://www.dentalhygienecanada.ca).

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