



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

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Media Release

Dental Hygienists Advise You to Focus on Oral Health in 2017

December 28, 2016 (Ottawa, ON) — The beginning of a new year is a perfect opportunity to make a fresh start and set new personal and professional goals. While many people focus on self-improvement initiatives, dental hygienists remind Canadians not to overlook oral health when making choices about improving overall physical and mental well-being.

“Good oral health is essential to total health and the key to a happy and productive life,” says Gerry Cool, 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. “Resolving to make oral health a priority in your daily life is an investment in your future,” adds Cool, noting that everyone can set oral health goals and develop new habits in 2017. Here are some helpful dental hygiene tips for all ages:

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. Brush your toddler’s teeth 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, and 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 should visit a dental hygienist regularly to develop an oral care routine that will help you to look and feel better, not just in 2017 but for a lifetime.

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.

– 30 –

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