



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

For immediate release (Disponible en français sur la demande)

Media Release

Dental Hygienists Help to Reduce Risks of Oral Cancer

February 1, 2017 (Ottawa, ON) — As active supporters of World Cancer Day (February 4), Canada's dental hygienists remind us that healthy lifestyle choices and early detection, through regular screenings by dental hygienists, are key to improving treatment outcomes for oral cancer.

World Cancer Day unites the global population in the fight against cancer, which claims 8.2 million lives worldwide every year. This year's campaign, under the theme "We Can. I Can," emphasizes the fact that we all have a role to play in reducing the burden of disease. "Canadians need to know that oral cancer is treatable if detected early," explains Gerry Cool, president of the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA). "Dental hygienists perform oral cancer screenings during each dental hygiene visit and will refer you to a specialist if any irregularities are detected, so it's important for everyone to see their dental hygienist regularly. Many clients have stories of lives saved by such early detection efforts."

Dental hygienists also help to reduce the risk factors for oral cancer by educating clients on the hazards of tobacco and alcohol use and of sun exposure, especially to the lips, as well as the importance of HPV vaccinations. "Dental hygienists are your partners in prevention," adds Cool. "They know that all Canadians can take important steps to maintain good oral and overall health and thus reduce their risk of cancer." By taking the lead in raising public awareness of oral cancer, its early signs and symptoms, and associated risk factors, dental hygienists are helping to meet the global challenge of saving lives, showing the world that, together, we can make a difference.

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 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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