



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

For immediate release (Disponible en français sur la demande)

Media Release

It's Heart Month and Your Oral Health Is Key to a Healthy Heart

February 19, 2025 (Ottawa, ON) — February is Heart Month in Canada and dental hygienists are taking this opportunity to remind you that your oral health care routine isn't just about your teeth and gums—it's a critical aspect of your heart health too.

Ineffective daily oral hygiene allows harmful bacteria to flourish, leading to issues such as bad breath, cavities, and gingivitis (gum disease), which, if left untreated, can progress to periodontal disease. These bacteria can also travel through your bloodstream, increasing your chances of infections such as endocarditis and contributing to clogged arteries that may lead to heart attacks or strokes.

“Recognizing signs of declining oral health is key,” says Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) President Alexandra Sheppard. “Look for red, swollen gums, bleeding during brushing or flossing, receding gums, bad breath, and signs of infection or decay. Even one area of bleeding is significant. Individuals with gingivitis or severe periodontitis, diagnosed heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity or those who smoke are particularly at risk.”

Taking proactive steps, such as saying no to tobacco products, adopting a vitamin-rich diet, and prioritizing regular exercise, makes an important difference. To prevent and manage gum issues, oral health professionals recommend that you maintain this easy daily oral care routine: gently brush your teeth at a 45-degree angle to the gums for two minutes twice a day with fluoridated toothpaste and clean between your teeth with floss or interdental tools. Ask your dental hygienist whether rinsing with an antibacterial solution will help you maintain oral health.

Even if the direct link between gum and heart disease isn't fully understood, studies show a higher risk for heart problems in those with poor oral health. A consistent oral care routine and regular

appointments with your dental hygienist are crucial. Remember to tell them about your health conditions, including any medications or over the counter products you are taking.

To learn more about the connection between your heart and oral health, visit dentalhygienecanada.ca/hearthealth



About the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA):

CDHA is the national voice of dental hygienists in Canada. Representing over 31,000 dental hygienists across the country, CDHA advocates for the advancement and promotion of the dental hygiene profession while maintaining a commitment to the public's oral health. Dental hygiene is the sixth largest regulated 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 dentalhygienecanada.ca. For more information on the work of CDHA, visit cdha.ca.

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