



# Record-Breaking Rinse-Off Kicks off Gingivitis Week in Canada

National Awareness Week Educates Canadians from June 6-12

(Toronto, Ontario – June 6, 2005) – Today the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) and Pfizer Consumer Healthcare are pleased to mark the official kick-off of the second-annual **Listerine Gingivitis Week** – and with good reason. A whopping 92 per cent of Canadians rate their gingivitis prevention routine as ‘good’ or ‘better,’ yet three out of four of us have gingivitis, which may lead to periodontal disease. The kicker? Periodontal disease has been clinically linked to other systemic diseases including diabetes, premature low birth weight infants and heart disease – but only six per cent of us are aware that we have this condition.

To promote gingivitis education and awareness, Listerine Gingivitis Week got off to a swishing start today as **close to 300 people** gathered in Toronto to set the world record for the most people to rinse at once with Listerine, the only over-the-counter mouthwash clinically proven to reduce gingivitis by up to 34 per cent when used in a properly applied program of oral hygiene. With mouthwash in hand, participants at the TD Centre Courtyard counted down to the beat of a drum, while emcee Dan Tisch gave the official thumbs-up for the rinse-off to commence. To highlight the links between oral health and overall health, donations were collected from participants to benefit the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

## Gingivitis – Who Me?

“While many Canadians are familiar with the term ‘gingivitis,’ few actually link this condition to themselves,” says Susan Ziebarth, the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association. “As the official partner for Listerine Gingivitis Week, our goal is to further educate Canadians on the symptoms and potential health implications of this condition. We want to prompt Canadians to talk to their dental hygienists about their oral care defense.”

“Contrary to popular belief, bleeding, red gums are not normal – they’re a warning sign for gingivitis,” says hygienist Marilyn Goulding. “The best oral care routine consists of brushing, rinsing twice daily with an essential oil-containing antiseptic mouthwash and flossing at least once daily. Yet the reality is only 33 per cent of Canadians are flossing, and even fewer are rinsing, which could be one reason why gingivitis is so wide-spread.”

Officially proclaimed Gingivitis Week by Toronto Mayor David Miller, the launch event featured a record-setting attempt – dubbed ‘The Great Canadian Listerine Rinse-Off’ – to jump-start a variety of interactive activities planned for the week including:

- An *‘Ask Me About Gingivitis’* at-event kiosk staffed by dental hygienists answering Canadians’ questions on gingivitis. All participants who spoke to a hygienist during the launch event were eligible to enter a draw to win a Panasonic® 47” wide-screen projection television.
- **Newly bilingual Gingivitis.ca** – The world’s only website devoted to gingivitis education – is now available in both of Canada’s official languages. From a risk factor quiz to compelling visuals, this website is a one-stop-shop for gingivitis information, and is staffed by a team of knowledgeable dental professionals to answer your questions during Gingivitis Week.
- The **Just Say Gingivitis Contest!** Guess what? Chatting with your dental professional about gingivitis just got a bit more exciting. Discuss your oral health at participating dental offices between June 6<sup>th</sup> and August 6<sup>th</sup> 2005, and complete a ballot to be eligible to win prizes valued at \$15,000. Prizes include a dream vacation or one of three Panasonic® 53” wide-screen projection televisions.
- Interactive games included the **Ultimate Rock-Climbing Challenge**, which rewarded contenders for braving the heights in pursuit of improved oral health, along with photo opportunities with the Listerine Action Hero on a quest to uncover the Evil Gingivitis.

### **Taking Gingivitis to Heart**

To drive home the link between oral health and systemic diseases, donations were collected at the Gingivitis Week kick-off event for the Heart & Stroke Foundation. According to the Heart and Stroke Foundation, “Recent research suggests that your teeth and gums hold important clues to your overall health, and many systemic diseases and conditions – including cardiovascular disease – have oral manifestations. But the oral cavity not only mirrors overall health, it can be an entry point for infections that can spread to other parts of the body. There is increasing evidence of a link between chronic inflammatory conditions such as gum disease and cardiovascular disease. The Heart and Stroke Foundation supports Gingivitis Week in its efforts reduce the incidence of this condition and emphasize the links between oral health and overall health.”

“For more than 125 years, the brand has taken an active role in gingivitis treatment and prevention, and is the only non-prescription mouth rinse recognized by the Canadian Dental Association to reduce and prevent gingivitis,” says Listerine Brand Manager Tanya Willer. “This initiative helped increase gingivitis awareness and relevancy among dental patients by 43 per cent in 2004. Together with the CDHA, our goal for 2005 is to help even more Canadians take action to improve their oral health.”

### **About the CDHA**

The Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) is proud to be the official professional partner of Listerine\* Gingivitis Week. Through Gingivitis Week, it is the goal of the CDHA to raise awareness of gingivitis as a condition, and encourage a dialogue between patients and their dental hygienists. Formed in 1964, the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) is the only national not-for-profit organization that represents the voice and vision of more than 14,000 dental hygienists in Canada.

### **About Listerine**

Listerine Antiseptic Mouthwash is the only non-prescription mouth rinse that is clinically proven and recognized by the Canadian Dental Association to reduce and prevent the progression of gingivitis by up to 34 per cent over your usual dental routine without Listerine. Listerine is available in Cool Mint, Fresh Burst, Original and new Cool Citrus flavours. For added protection against tartar buildup, use Listerine Tartar Control, and to prevent cavities, use Fluoride Listerine. Listerine Mouthwashes are available at retail outlets across Canada.

Listerine Mouthwash is owned and marketed by Pfizer. Pfizer Inc. discovers, develops, manufactures and markets leading prescription medicines, for humans and animals, and many of the world's best-known consumer products. In Canada, Pfizer employs approximately 2,300 people. Canadian headquarters of Pfizer Consumer Healthcare is in Toronto, Ontario.

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