

Hygienists urge Canadians to brush, floss, rinse for healthy mouths, healthy bodies this Gingivitis Week

Research-based Call-to-Action issued for the third Gingivitis Week, June 5-11

(Toronto, Ontario - June 5, 2006) - Today, the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) is marking the start of the third annual **Listerine Gingivitis Week** with the release of their first Call-to-Action for all Canadians to improve their oral health for optimum overall health. "More than fifty per cent of Canadians currently have gingivitis -inflammation of the gums caused by a plaque build-up in the mouth," says CDHA Executive Director Susan Ziebarth. "Gum disease, or periodontitis, develops from pre-existing gingivitis, and recent research suggests periodontitis may be potentially linked to other systemic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and pre-term, low birth weight babies. Gingivitis is both preventable and reversible and is therefore an important health topic to address now."

Based on a special series of four comprehensive position papers being published by the CDHA in the Canadian Journal of Dental Hygiene, the Call-to-Action not only encourages Canadians to improve their oral health, but it provides them with both the motivation (potential oral-systemic health links) and the specific means for doing so - regular oral health checkups, brushing, flossing, and rinsing with an essential oil antiseptic mouthrinse.

Gingivitis: Silent symptoms, serious potential

"The early stages of gingivitis are often painless so it's easy for people to ignore the symptoms," says dental hygienist and CDHA member Evie Jesin. "But it's extremely important not to. Healthy gums do not bleed. This may be a sign that you have gingivitis, and it's time people take this condition more seriously. They need to act now to reverse the effects, since this could reduce the potential to progress to other gum diseases such as periodontitis."

As highlighted in the Call-to-Action, research is continuing to show potential links between oral health and chronic systemic conditions. After reviewing the science, the CDHA is hoping to give Canadians the motivation they need to take immediate steps to reduce and prevent gingivitis.

But motivation is only half the battle. "Once Canadians know *why* they should act, the Call-to-Action shows them *how* they can maintain good oral health as part of overall health," says

Ziebarth. "A hygienist's job is to provide patients with an oral hygiene routine that works for them. With this Call-to-Action, hygienists can now make patient-tailored recommendations that are not only backed by science, but also give their patients options to ensure maximum compliance to their recommended routine."

Brush, floss, rinse away gingivitis

The series of position papers on brushing, flossing, rinsing, and oral-systemic links will run from May to December in the Canadian Journal of Dental Hygiene, the official publication of the CDHA. "As a dental hygienist and an oral hygiene instructor, flossing is and continues to be the gold standard for plaque removal between teeth," says Jesin. "However, the reality is that as little as ten percent of the population flosses regularly, and our oral health suffers as a result."

The flossing position paper explored a myriad of alternative flossing aids and found there are numerous viable alternatives to traditional flossing. These alternatives are listed in the Call-to-Action, and include floss holders, picks, and automatic flossers.

Further, the CDHA's position paper on commercially available over-the-counter oral rinsing products concluded that adding an essential oil antiseptic mouthrinse to an oral hygiene routine reduces and prevents plaque and gingivitis by up to 34 per cent over a routine without it. "In well-controlled, long-term studies, Listerine was shown to be a safe and the most effective over-the-counter rinse," says Ziebarth. "Which is why rinsing is confidently included in our Call-to-Action as an essential part of the oral hygiene routine. With this unprecedented step, we are now encouraging Canadian hygienists to recommend rinsing to help control plaque and gingivitis."

About Gingivitis Week

While many Canadians are familiar with the term 'gingivitis,' few link the condition to themselves. That's where Gingivitis Week comes in, with an aim to educate Canadians on the symptoms, prevalence and health implications of the condition. In addition to the release of the CDHA's Call-to-Action, Gingivitis Week activities include:

- **Gingivitis Boot Camp:** Kick-off event on June 5 at noon at Toronto's TD Centre featuring gingivitis-themed activities, as well as an "Ask a Dental Hygienist" booth where participants can have their gingivitis questions answered.
- **Public Service Announcement:** Watch for the CDHA's gingivitis Public Service Announcement featuring Canadian music legend Sass Jordan continuing on the airwaves until July 31.
- **Gingivits.ca:** The world's only website devoted entirely to gingivitis education including the opportunity to "Ask a Dental Hygienist" questions all Gingivitis Week long.
- **Just Say Gingivitis Contest:** Win prizes just for discussing gingivitis with your dental health professional! Do so at participating dental offices until June 30, 2006, and complete a ballot to be eligible to win more than \$9,000 worth of prizes.

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 indicated for and recognized by the Canadian Dental Association to reduce and prevent the progression of gingivitis. Listerine is available in Cool Mint, Fresh Burst, Original and less-intense Cool Citrus flavours. To help keep teeth white, use new Advanced Listerine. 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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For more information, and to arrange an interview with a representative of the CDHA or from Pfizer Canada, please contact:

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CDHA ENCOURAGES CANADIANS TO ADD RINSING TO ORAL HYGIENE ROUTINE

Summary: CDHA Position Paper on Over-the-Counter Oral Rinsing Products

On June 5, 2006, the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) announced its first official recommended oral hygiene regime to maintain optimal oral health as an important part of overall health. This routine consists of regular oral hygiene checkups, brushing, flossing, and rinsing with an essential oil antiseptic mouthrinse. Based on a series of position papers, this recommendation will be published in the Canadian Journal of Dental Hygiene (CJDH) from May to December of 2006.

Specifically, the ***Position Paper on Commercially Available Over-the-Counter Oral Rinsing Products*** (July-August CJDH) demonstrates that:

- Dental hygienists are encouraged to recommend oral rinsing with commercially available over the counter rinses (mouth wash) as an adjunct to their clients' usual mechanical plaque control measures (i.e. brushing, flossing).
- Based on well-controlled long-term (6 month and longer) clinical studies, mouth rinses with a fixed combination of three essential oils – thymol 0.063%, eucalyptol 0.091% and menthol 0.042% along with other ingredient(s) (i.e. methyl salicylate 0.0660%) – have shown reductions in plaque and gingival inflammation beyond that accomplished with mechanical means alone (i.e. brushing, flossing).
- For over-the-counter, daily use in clients with inadequate plaque control and/or gingivitis or early periodontitis, Listerine® stands as the most substantiated product for efficacy, safety, and an acceptable side effect profile.
- Other oral rinses, such as those with the active ingredients cetylpyridinium chloride, triclosan and amine/stannous fluoride, demonstrate some reductions in plaque and gingivitis, but the research surrounding these formulations is less conclusive.

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