

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Healthy gums look good on you

Brussels, 19 April 2023. Keeping gums healthy and regularly checked is an integral part of everybody's general health as scientific evidence shows a clear association between gum disease and many serious, chronic conditions including diabetes, cardiovascular disease. Besides, healthy gums maintain anyone's attractiveness and self-confidence, and should become a part of a healthy and sustainable lifestyle.

"Healthy gums look good on you! Protect them!" is the slogan for [Gum Health Day 2023](#), a worldwide public-health campaign held on 12 May, led by the EFP (European Federation of Periodontology), and developed by its national member societies in more than 30 countries in all continents. The initiative aims to inform the general public about the detrimental effects of gum diseases (gingivitis, periodontitis, peri-implant mucositis, and peri-implantitis) on both oral and overall health, and the advantages - including aesthetic advantages - of keeping their gums healthy at all times.

"This year's campaign focuses on aesthetics and wellbeing, since gum health plays a part in raising each person's personal appearance, self-esteem, and allure, whatever their age, gender, and condition," explains Spyros Vassilopoulos, Gum Health Day 2023 co-ordinator.

Affecting a large proportion of adults everywhere, gum diseases are chronic inflammatory conditions that are linked to major systemic health issues including diabetes mellitus, myocardial infarction, heart failure, stroke, chronic kidney disease, adverse pregnancy outcomes, rheumatoid arthritis, Alzheimer's disease, erectile dysfunction, certain forms of cancer, and more. Gum diseases, or periodontal diseases, may also cause tooth loss and other masticatory and aesthetic problems in the mouth.

"A healthy smile comprises two major components: our teeth, driven by the white aesthetics, and gums, driven by pink aesthetics. Both of these components need to be healthy for a person to have an appealing smile and, even more importantly, in order to look good because you feel good and healthy," according to Prof Vassilopoulos.

"One common regret among patients is that they have lost the tissue between their teeth - these gaps, or 'black triangles', make them feel uncomfortable. Unfortunately, trying to regrow that tissue is one of the most challenging and unpredictable tasks in periodontal surgery. It makes much more sense in terms of beauty, cost, time, and outcomes to protect your gums by keeping them healthy rather than trying to undo the damage of periodontal disease once it has already been inflicted," highlights the Gum Health Day 2023 co-ordinator.

People often fail to realise the major impact that healthy gums have on their appearance and self-esteem until they are hit by gum disease. "Many devote a lot of time and energy to their appearance - so protecting your gums is the smart move. Just as your skin, hair or eyes matter in terms of appearance, so do your gums. And if your clothes or shoes are important to your looks, so are your gums. *Wearing* healthy gums greatly contributes to your appearance. After all, healthy gums are good for your health, yes, but also look good on you" Prof Vassilopoulos reminds.

Join Gum Health Day 2023

All oral health professionals are invited to join Gum Health Day 2023 and to disseminate among their patients, colleagues, and social media followers the educational materials that the EFP offers for free at its website www.efp.org. They are also warmly encouraged to have fun with our themed Instagram filter and with the [Gum Health Day personalised campaign builder](#), which allows anyone to create their own posters and social media posts and stories, choosing their favourite catchphrase and language and customising it with their own logo and image, as they see fit.

"My advice is: smile always, no matter what. If your gums are healthy, not swollen, not reddish, not bleeding, they don't need to be super perfect. If they feel good, they look good," sums up Spyros Vassilopoulos.

EFP, global benchmark in periodontology

The European Federation of Periodontology (EFP, www.efp.org) is a non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting awareness of periodontal science and the importance of gum health for oral-health professionals and the public. Its guiding vision is "Periodontal health for a better life".

Founded in 1991, the EFP is a federation of 37 national periodontal societies representing more than 16,000 periodontists, dentists, researchers, and oral-health professionals in Europe and around the world. It organises events and campaigns grounded in evidence-based science in periodontal and oral health, including EuroPerio (the world's leading congress in periodontology and implant dentistry), Perio Master Clinic, and Perio Workshop. Gum Health Day, its awareness campaign for the public celebrated annually on 12 May, brings key messages on gum health to millions of people across the world.

The EFP also organises workshops and outreach campaigns with its partners: past projects have covered the relationship between periodontal disease and diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and caries, as well as women's oral health during pregnancy.

The extensive list of EFP publications include the *Journal of Clinical Periodontology*, the research summary *JCP Digest*, and the online magazine *Perio Insight*, which offers expert views on periodontal science and clinical practice. The federation's work in education is also highly significant, notably its accredited university-based programmes for postgraduate education in periodontology and implant dentistry.

The EFP has no professional or commercial agenda.

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