

The journey to a healthy smile

Brussels, 15 July 2024. Lifestyle choices significantly affect oral health, and a healthy smile is more than just an aesthetic asset — it's a key indicator of overall health. Conditions such as gingivitis and periodontitis can have far-reaching impacts, affecting not only the mouth, but the entire body, making good oral hygiene essential.

The major oral diseases (caries and periodontitis) impact nearly half the world's population, over 3.6 billion people, surpassing the burden of the most common non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, mental disorder, cancer, cardiovascular disease and chronic respiratory disease, which all together reach 2.5 billion individuals. Indeed, an important fact is that severe periodontitis (the major reason for tooth loss in adults) is the 6th most common disease overall.

The good news is that oral diseases are for the most part preventable. Regular brushing with fluoride toothpaste, use of a mouth rinse, and cleaning between teeth with interdental brushes are simple yet powerful habits that can protect gums and teeth. Furthermore, adopting a balanced diet, engaging in regular exercise, avoiding tobacco, managing stress, and ensuring quality sleep contribute to both general health and gum health.

Professor William Papaioannou, project committee expert for the European Federation of Periodontology (EFP), said: "As a federation and as oral health professionals, we have the power to transform lives by guiding our patients towards healthier smiles and better overall health. Together, we can make a significant impact on their journey to a healthy smile and considerably increase their quality of life."

Regular medical check-ups, including monitoring glucose levels and blood pressure, along with routine dental visits, play a crucial role in maintaining both oral and overall health. These practices help detect potential issues early and ensure people stay on track with their health goals.

Today the EFP, with the support of meridol, launches a comprehensive campaign titled "The journey to a healthy smile." This initiative aims to promote oral health awareness and best practices by helping the public understand gingivitis and periodontitis, explain risk factors and general health implications of gum health, and provide practical tips to fit healthy behaviour in daily routines.

Effective motivation strategies are essential in actively engaging and helping patients achieve and maintain a healthy smile. The campaign will provide educational videos and materials for oral health professionals to use in motivating their patients to make positive changes at different stages of their journey. The videos will cover topics such as spotting and preventing gum disease, the impact of daily habits on oral health and motivating patients on their oral health journey to a fitter and longer life.

“We are proud to partner with the European Federation of Periodontology on this innovative initiative,” said Irina Laura Chivu-Garip, Colgate-Palmolive Head of Scientific Affairs for Europe. “By leveraging the power of behavioural science, we aim to inspire lifelong healthy habits in individuals, ultimately enhancing their oral health, and impacting general health and wellbeing. This collaboration underscores our commitment to advancing health literacy and aims to engage medical and dental professionals, as well as their patients, in pursuing health goals by leveraging evidence-based approaches,” concludes.

EFP, promoting gum health for everybody

The EFP (European Federation of Periodontology, efp.org) is a global non-profit organisation with a European core, which promotes periodontal science and practice, and awareness of gum health and gum disease among oral health professionals, other medical professionals, policymakers, and the public. The EFP’s vision is “Periodontal health for a better life”.

Founded in 1991, the EFP brings together 43 national scientific periodontal societies, representing more than 18,000 oral health professionals and researchers in six continents. It leads the global conversation on periodontal science and guidelines, and pursues its mission by organising evidence-based scientific events and campaigns, including: EuroPerio, the world’s leading congress in periodontology and implant dentistry; Perio Master Clinic, a theme-based conference on hands-on periodontal practice; Perio Workshop, a high-level meeting shedding light on emerging issues; and Gum Health Day, a global awareness initiative celebrated on 12 May.

Furthermore, the EFP defines and promotes high-quality training in periodontology and implant dentistry on all three levels of professional education, from undergraduate training, postgraduate vocational education and training to its 24 accredited university programmes for specialist training.

The EFP works towards the pan-European recognition of periodontology as a dental speciality and is supported by industry partners, but has no commercial or professional agenda.

About Colgate-Palmolive

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