39 national scientific societies join European Gum Health Day 2018 to put periodontology in the spotlight

- The European Federation of Periodontology (EFP) promotes this international awareness day on May 12 under the slogan “Health begins with healthy gums.”

- European Gum Health Day 2018 includes an array of events in 29 European countries, including Switzerland, and 10 Latin American nations.

- Activities include free periodontal check-ups, scientific events, conferences, and other educational and communication initiatives.

1. All dentistry and health professionals are invited to sign the EFP Manifesto as a call to action for the prevention, early detection, and treatment of gum disease, and to read the Perio Focus paper, focused on the impact of gum disease impact on the health and well-being of humankind.

Bern, 9 May 2018. “Health begins with healthy gums” is the slogan chosen to sum up the message of European Gum Health Day 2018, an awareness initiative that takes on May 12 in 39 countries in Europe, northern Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America. The aim of this event is to raise public understanding of the importance of gum health and the growing threat that gum diseases imply for overall health and public health.

Gingivitis and periodontitis are two chronic, inflammatory gum diseases which affect eight out of 10 people aged 35 years and over, so they are among the most widespread conditions that affect human beings. Unfortunately, gum diseases are still poorly acknowledged, even if scientific evidence shows that they are associated with cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, chronic kidney disease, rheumatoid arthritis, and other serious, chronic conditions.

European Gum Health Day 2018 is promoted by the European Federation of Periodontology (EFP) and involves a wide range of activities – including free periodontal
check-ups, scientific events, conferences, and other educational and communication initiatives – which are organised at the local level by national scientific societies of periodontology.

Xavier Struillou, coordinator of European Gum Health Day 2018, and Anton Sculean, president of the EFP, today presented European Gum Health Day 2018 at a press conference in Bern (Switzerland).

**European Gum Health Day 2018 goes global**

In a great leap forward in terms of international impact, a total of 39 national periodontal societies are taking part in European Gum Health Day 2018, including 29 EFP-affiliated societies and 10 Latin American societies, which join this initiative for the first time. This record level of participation exceeds the 27 societies that participated in the 2017 awareness day.

European Gum Health Day 2018 includes the active involvement of the national societies of periodontology of Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Israel, Ireland, Lithuania, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom. All these societies have used the logos, posters, infographics, and templates provided by the EFP to convey a common message across borders.

In addition, European Gum Health Day 2018 has received official support from the Ibero-Panamerican Federation of Periodontology (FIPP), whose eight Caribbean and South American members have organised themed events around the same message and material. These are the periodontal societies of Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela. The societies from Colombia and Panama have also joined European Gum Health Day 2018.

In the framework of European Gum Health Day 2018, the EFP encourages dentists, oral care professionals and other health professionals to sign and disseminate the ‘EFP Manifesto: Perio and General Health’, an international call to action for the prevention, early detection, and treatment of gum disease. Dental practices, clinicians, institutions, policymakers, companies, and members of the wider medical community are invited to visit [www.efp.org/efp-manifesto/sign.php](http://www.efp.org/efp-manifesto/sign.php) and sign the EFP Manifesto.

European Gum Health Day 2018 is also being used to disseminate among the dental and health professionals the Perio Focus paper “Impact of the global burden of periodontal diseases on health, nutrition and well-being of mankind: a call for global action,” written by experts Søren Jepsen, Maurizio Tonetti, Lijan Jin, and Joan Otomo-Corgel. The [Perio Focus paper](http://www.efp.org/efp-manifesto/sign.php) has been endorsed by the EFP and more than 50 international and national societies of periodontology.

**Oral hygiene and check-ups**

Fortunately, both reversible gingivitis and irreversible periodontitis are preventable and treatable through a combination of appropriate oral hygiene and regular periodontal check-ups performed by professional periodontists at the dental practice. If left untreated, gum diseases worsen over time and can cause tooth loss, aesthetic and masticatory disfunction, problems with speech, and chronic bad breath.
“European Gum Health Day 2018 aims to remind people that, even if still often overlooked, gum health is a key factor for general health throughout life, and that gum disease is a major public health concern as it is linked to serious conditions, including heart disease and cerebrovascular disease in Switzerland and the rest of Europe,” says Xavier Struillou, coordinator of European Gum Health Day 2018. “Gum health can help us to save many lives, to detect or prevent many severe conditions, and to save billions in medical costs.”

Anton Sculean, president of the EFP, added: “Gum disease’s prevalence and gravity increase with age and as a result of contributing factors such as smoking and obesity, but it can be prevented and successfully treated, especially if diagnosed early. That is why, as our motto says, ‘Health begins with healthy gums’, and we have an opportunity to take action.”

**EFP, global benchmark in periodontology**

European Gum Health Day 2018 is an initiative of the European Federation of Periodontology (EFP, [www.efp.org](http://www.efp.org)) and its 30 national scientific societies, comprising 14,000 specialist periodontists and other members of the dental team focused on improving periodontal science and practice in Europe and around the world.

The EFP is the leading voice on gum health and gum disease globally and the driving force behind EuroPerio, the triennial periodontal conference considered the most important in the world. EuroPerio9 is taking place in Amsterdam between 20 and 23 June, 2018. Find more information at [www.efp.org/europerio9/](http://www.efp.org/europerio9/).

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