

Women Should Take Gum Disease To Heart

(NAPSA)—Did you know that having healthy teeth and gums may result in more than having a sparkling white smile and fresh breath? Many people may not realize that taking proper care of their mouth may also be important to their heart health.

WomenHeart—the only national, patient-centered organization dedicated solely to advancing women’s heart health through advocacy, community education and patient support—wants to empower women to take charge of their heart health by helping improve their overall health, which includes good oral health care practices. WomenHeart is teaming up with Colgate-Palmolive to encourage women to take the Heart Promises Pledge—a promise for women to start taking ownership of their heart health by making small yet important changes in their daily lives.

Heart Promises focuses on empowering women by providing the knowledge and tools needed to make positive lifestyle changes to help reduce their risk of heart disease. The campaign’s online resource, www.HealthyMouthHealthyBody.com, is specifically designed to educate women about the role that proper oral care can play in improving their heart health.

“A growing body of research suggests an association between severe gum disease and certain

WomenHeart’s Scientific Advisory Council wants women to know:

- More women than men die of heart disease.
- Women can lower the risks of heart disease by 82 percent by leading a healthy lifestyle.
- By brushing with an anti-bacterial and fluoride toothpaste, women can improve their oral health and help maintain their heart health.
- Heart disease and severe gum disease have a number of common risk factors, which suggests there may be a relationship between the two.
- Female hormones can lead to a higher risk of gum disease.
- Gingivitis, an early form of periodontal disease, affects approximately 75 percent of U.S. adults.
- Up to 30 percent of American adults suffer from periodontal disease.

To learn more about the association between heart health and oral health, visit www.HealthyMouthHealthyBody.com.

Join WomenHeart at www.WomenHeart.org to receive a monthly newsletter with the latest information about women and heart disease and ways you can maintain your own heart health.



serious health conditions, such as heart disease—the No. 1 cause of death in U.S. women,” said Altigracia Chavez, M.D., cardiothoracic surgeon with the Cleveland Clinic Heart Center, Cleveland, Ohio, and member of WomenHeart’s Scientific Advisory Council. “It’s important for physicians to talk with their patients about all aspects of their health and steps they can take to maintain a

healthy lifestyle—and that includes helping them prevent oral health problems.”

While everyone needs to take good care of their oral health, proper oral care is particularly important for women as female hormones can lead to a higher risk of gum disease. For instance, changes in hormone levels due to puberty, pregnancy and menopause cause women to be at a higher risk for developing periodontal disease—a serious form of gum disease associated with tooth loss and other health conditions. Heart disease and severe gum disease have a number of common risk factors, which suggests there may be a relationship between the two.

“With the hectic schedules of today’s women, whose own well-being is often neglected due to time spent taking care of both children and parents, finding the time to tend to health care needs can seem overwhelming,” said Carrie Loveless, heart attack survivor and patient spokesperson for WomenHeart. “But what many people do not realize is that you can take a few simple steps toward a healthier lifestyle. One easy way is to use an anti-bacterial toothpaste that fights germs and helps keep your gums healthy, like Colgate Total.”

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Note to Editors: Colgate Total® toothpaste is FDA approved for the prevention of tooth decay, plaque and gingivitis—not approved for the prevention or treatment of periodontitis or other diseases, such as heart disease.