



SEE YOUR DENTIST

Healthy Mouth, Healthy Body: What's The Connection?

(NAPSA)—According to a recent survey, consumers named having “whiter teeth” or a “better smile” most often when asked to list the benefits of practicing good oral hygiene. This suggests that many Americans are more focused on how their smile looks than on the health benefits of good oral care, despite emerging evidence suggesting that the gum disease gingivitis, if allowed to progress to periodontitis (advanced gum disease), may increase one’s risk for broader health problems over time.

Nearly 100 percent of dental professionals and physicians surveyed indicate that they believe there is some kind of a link between oral health and overall health, and although no cause and effect relationship has been established, many are already trying to educate consumers about the mouth-body association.

“It’s great to see that physicians as well as dentists are informing their patients about this emerging science, but we also need to take it a step further by recommending immediate actions that can make a difference,” says celebrity dentist Dr. Gregg Lituchy. “My patients appreciate it when I can recommend simple ways to achieve improvement in their oral care. For example, in addition to regular visits to the dentist, twice-daily brushing and once-daily flossing, I recommend rinsing with Listerine for 30 seconds twice a day, which has been shown to reduce significantly more plaque and gingivitis when added to brushing and flossing. An extra minute a day can make a big difference.”



A healthy mouth may be more important than ever, and good oral health means healthy teeth *and* gums.

The Mouth-Body Connection

There are several explanations for the possible association between oral health and overall health. One theory involves the germs that cause plaque and advanced gum disease (periodontitis), while another points to the potential effects of chronic inflammation of the gums associated with periodontitis. In any event, genetics or bad habits, such as smoking, may increase the chances of both poor oral health and poor overall health.

What To Do?

The best way to determine whether or not you are one of the 50 percent of Americans that may have gingivitis is to see your dentist or dental hygienist regularly. You should also share your oral history with your physician.

To learn more about the mouth-body connection, visit www.listerine.com.