

# ♥ HEART HEALTH

## Reason To Smile: Taking Care Of Your Heart Through Your Teeth

(NAPSA)—Most people already know that heart disease is America's number one killer. And most people know that exercise and a balanced diet are ways to prevent this sort of disease—but most of us don't exercise or eat the right foods as often as we should. So what if there was another way to help prevent heart disease? Something simple, convenient and something you're likely to do every day...like taking care of your teeth?

According to the Harvard Women's Health Watch, there is a relationship between oral health and general health, suggesting that taking good care of your teeth has an overall, positive effect on your body. Buildup on your teeth can eventually contribute to buildup in your arteries and, in turn, lead to heart disease.

Below are some simple steps you can take to keep your teeth, and your heart, in shape:

- **The two-minute rule.** Nearly everyone brushes his or her teeth at least once (or twice) a day. However, many people do not brush for as long as they should. Experts recommend brushing for a full two minutes. One easy way to remember this is to use an electronic toothbrush equipped with a timer (such as the Synchronic<sup>®</sup> Advanced Action Sonic Plaque



**An important part of an overall healthy lifestyle is keeping teeth strong.**

Remover available from Waterpik). Other options include using an egg timer or timing your brushing to coincide with TV commercials. This will ensure that you are removing that difficult plaque from your teeth and gums, thereby reducing your chances of periodontal disease.

- **Don't forget the tongue.** One major cause of bad breath is the buildup of bacteria on the tongue. According to some experts, the bacteria that causes periodontitis (gum disease) and the bacteria in the arteries of heart disease patients is one and the same. Use a tongue scraper daily to reduce

this buildup and have fresher breath.

- **Go easy on that toothbrush.** Many people believe that brushing hard is the best way to remove plaque. The best way to brush your teeth is to place the toothbrush at a 45-degree angle against your gums and gently brush back and forth.

- **Don't just brush and floss.** Research has found a link between oral health and heart disease. Although brushing and flossing are great, they still can't get to many hard to reach areas. One idea is to invest in a dental water jet, aka "The Waterpik<sup>®</sup>." The new, cordless dental water jet, recommended by dental professionals 10 to one, provides three times deeper cleaning than brushing and flossing alone. In addition, it makes your mouth feel fresh and clean. This product is clinically proven to reverse gingivitis and reduce gum disease. In addition, the cordless dental water jet is rechargeable, compact in size, lightweight and easy to use—great for anyone who likes to travel or just wants to reduce the clutter on their counters.

For more information on products available to help you improve your teeth, visit the Web site at [www.waterpik.com](http://www.waterpik.com).