

# HEALTH ALERT!

## Healthy Mouth Leads To Healthy Body

(NAPSA)—The old adage says that a way to a person's heart is through their stomach, but researchers now believe that the way to a healthy heart might be through your teeth.

Poor oral health and tooth loss have been linked to many serious medical conditions, such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and even certain types of cancer. Given this connection, taking the right steps to have a healthy mouth and prevent tooth loss can be important for maintaining better overall health.

"There is a connection between a healthy mouth and a healthy body, so it's important for people to prioritize their oral health and save their natural teeth," said Dr. Louis Rossman, an endodontist and president of the American Association of Endodontists.

The most common cause of tooth loss is not taking good care of the mouth—brushing, flossing and regular professional cleanings. It can also be caused by an accidental injury or infection. An infected tooth can cause severe facial pain and can sometimes lead to a more serious infection.

Whatever the cause, it is important to know that tooth loss has been associated with heart disease, greater mortality and a decline in physical or mental abilities, especially in the elderly.

To prevent tooth loss and associated health problems, proper oral health care is crucial. According to Dr. Rossman, the best way for people to preserve their nat-

### The following steps are recommended to maintain good oral health:

- Tell your dental team about any overall health concerns, especially regarding any illnesses or chronic conditions.
- If you experience tooth sensitivity, tooth pain or facial pain, visit an endodontist immediately.
- If you need a root canal, see an endodontist who specializes in virtually painless root canal procedures.
- Brush your teeth twice a day and replace your toothbrush every 3 or 4 months.
- Floss daily to prevent tooth decay caused by bacteria that linger after brushing.
- Visit your general dentist regularly for professional cleanings and oral exams.

For more information about saving your natural teeth or to find a local endodontist, visit [www.rootcanalspecialists.org](http://www.rootcanalspecialists.org).



ural teeth if the root is infected is to visit an endodontist, a dentist who specializes in root canals. Root canal treatment is a routine procedure for saving infected natural teeth and can even save a knocked-out tooth.

"People should put aside their fears of root canals and strive to preserve their natural teeth. Modern advances by endodontists, the root canal specialists, make root canals virtually painless today," said Dr. Rossman.

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