

Health Awareness

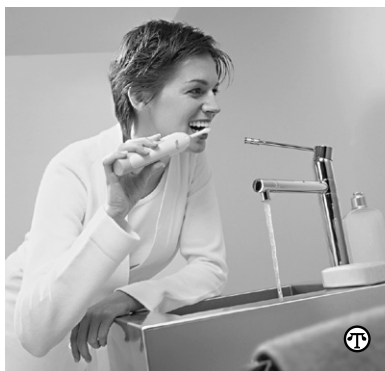
Healthy Mouth + Healthy Body = Great Overall Health

(NAPSA)—When people assess their overall health, what may come to mind are physical barometers like fitness, blood pressure and cholesterol levels. But oral health, something we attempt to practice every day, isn't necessarily given the same level of attention. It's time Americans discover what dental and medical professionals have known for years: The health of your mouth is a reflection of your overall physical health.

Consider the "Oral Health in America" report issued in 2000 by then-Surgeon General David Satcher. "Oral health is integral to overall health," he said in the report. "Simply put, that means you cannot be healthy without oral health. New research is pointing to associations between chronic oral infections and heart and lung diseases, stroke, low birth-weight, and premature births. Associations between periodontal disease and diabetes have long been noted."

When taking a closer look at how to promote good oral health and hygiene, Americans need to look no further than their toothbrush. Most people zip through a brushing with a manual toothbrush in less than 40 seconds. That's far less than what dental professionals recommend.

So what can you do to improve your oral health? One easy solution is using a power toothbrush, which does a better job of removing plaque than a manual version, makes Americans brush for a full two minutes and encourages brushing all areas of the mouth.



Using a power toothbrush can contribute to a healthy mouth and a healthy body.

"When my patients switch to a power toothbrush, I see significantly cleaner teeth and healthier gums, which results in a better check-up," says Registered Dental Hygienist Lisa Copeland. "With many of my patients unaware of how to choose a power toothbrush, I recommend models that have the most advanced sonic technology and deliver results around and between teeth, in hard-to-reach-areas, and below the gum line."

The latest arrival is the Sonicare Elite power toothbrush from Philips Oral Healthcare. Inspired by sonic technology used in dental offices, it incorporates the latest technology and was developed with direct input from dental professionals. It is also supported by clinical studies that show it removes significantly more plaque than a traditional toothbrush. With bristle tips that move three times faster than other leading power toothbrushes, the Sonicare

Elite drives water and toothpaste into hard-to-reach areas.

Using a power toothbrush like the Sonicare Elite, which hits stores in May, can make those twice-yearly visits to the dental office a more pleasant experience. Copeland, who has been a registered dental hygienist for 18 years, has some simple tips on other ways to help achieve superior and effective oral health:

1. Be sure to brush all tooth surfaces in your mouth for the dental professional-recommended time (two minutes with a power toothbrush and three to five with a manual brush), twice a day, along with daily flossing.

2. If considering a power toothbrush, look for the latest sonic technology. The investment you make in your toothbrush can have a lasting effect on your overall health.

3. Brushing your tongue will help freshen your breath by preventing bacterial accumulation on your tongue surface.

4. Replace your toothbrush every three to six months. A worn-out toothbrush will not properly clean your teeth.

5. Consult your dental professional for recommendations on the best oral care products to use.

Dental professionals have clearly acknowledged the associations between oral health and overall wellness, and are proactively educating their patients on the possible links. "By working in tandem with medical professionals," comments Copeland, "we can strive for a healthy mouth in a healthy body."