

No.5/November 2010

# ORAL HEALTH



THE  
COMPLETE  
**GUIDE**  
TO ORAL  
HEALTH

## SMILE WITH CONFIDENCE

**Tiffani Thiessen** explains how seemingly minor oral health concerns could lead to more serious implications

Tooth decay  
The #1 chronic  
childhood disease  
in the United States



Improve your smile  
Leave a lasting  
impression





## CHALLENGES

How can you choose an oral care product that is **best for the health** of your family? The quickest way is to simply look for the American Dental Association (ADA) Seal of Acceptance.

## Trust the science on the shelf

**T**he ADA Seal of Acceptance ensures the product has been independently evaluated by scientific experts for safety and effectiveness. More than 150 scientists, many from leading universities, with expertise in dental materials, microbiology, pharmacology, toxicology and chemistry serve as consultants to the ADA in order to evaluate products. Companies seek-

ing the ADA Seal of Acceptance pay a small fee to help cover costs, and the program is maintained on a non-profit basis.

The ADA Seal of Acceptance program is part of the ADA's ongoing mission to promote good oral health. Not all submitted products earn the Seal. The ADA Seal of Acceptance program often has higher criteria than that required by the Food and Drug Administration.

When you see the ADA Seal of Acceptance on a prod-

uct you can be assured that the company has gone the "extra mile" to show that they meet or exceed important performance standards.

You'll find the ADA Seal of Acceptance on many oral healthcare products including: toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss, mouthrinse, denture care products and sugar-free chewing gum.

To find products with the ADA Seal of Acceptance and to learn more about your oral health, ask a dentist who is an ADA member and

visit [www.ADA.org](http://www.ADA.org).

*The content in this special section was not developed by, or in collaboration with, the American Dental Association. Unless otherwise indicated, the ADA does not endorse any sponsor or non-ADA content appearing in the special section.*



**JOHN W. HELLSTEIN, D.D.S., M.S.**  
Chair, ADA Council on Scientific Affairs

# MEDIA PLANET

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“Through effective public-private partnerships that expand access to care, together we are helping health happen.”

Stanley Bergman,  
Chairman and CEO,  
Henry Schein, Inc.

Henry Schein Cares, our global corporate social responsibility program, is a source of pride for Team Schein Members around the world. The mission of Henry Schein Cares is to “help health happen” by expanding access to care for at-risk and underserved populations globally through the support of not-for-profit organizations, institutions, and communities dedicated to increasing the delivery of health education and care.

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Our commitment to social responsibility began in 1932 with our founding as a pharmacy in Queens, NY, and has grown steadily as Henry Schein, Inc. has evolved into the largest distributor of health care products and services to office-based physician, dental, and animal health practices.



# NEWS



At the heart of the ongoing **health care reform** discussions are the issues of quality, cost and access to care.

## Advancing access to oral health

**The quality of medical and oral health care in the U.S. is globally recognized, but there is a gap between those who have access to care and those who do not.**

We also know that shifting focus from primarily treating acute conditions to providing patients with access to regular preventative care will improve wellness and reduce costs. Despite these facts, the health care community has far to go to bridge the disparity that separates the underserved

from the rest of society. Although the vital link between oral health and overall wellness is clear, oral health continues to be a low priority among policymakers and consumers.

There is no magic bullet to solve this complex problem, but partnerships between the public and private sectors hold great promise. Coalitions of industry, government, educators, health care professionals, and non-governmental organizations are contributing unique strengths and resources to increase access to oral health care.

### Collaborating for change

One example is the American Dental Association's "Give Kids A Smile" (GKAS) program, which provides free dental education, screening and treatment to millions of underserved children. "GKAS" is sponsored by Colgate, a leading global consumer products company; Henry Schein, a leading provider of health care products and services; and DEXIS, a leader in digital imaging systems; and supported by public and private universities, dental societies and



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dental manufacturers. This year "GKAS" mobilized 50,000 dental team volunteers to serve 320,000 children at 1,700 locations on a single day.

Another example is the Health Resources and Services Administration's National Interprofessional Initiative on Oral Health. This collaboration with other U.S. Health and Human Ser-

vices agencies and external partners has among its goals expansion of oral health services into primary care settings. Additionally, there are scores of state, regional, education, private sector and not-for-profit coalitions aimed at increasing access to health care—often providing free medical and dental services.

Unquestionably, increasing access to oral health care is challenging, but by expanding and replicating innovative public-private partnerships and by engaging consumers, insurers and policymakers this goal can be achieved.



## THANKS TO OUR VALUED SUPPLIER PARTNERS FOR HELPING HEALTH HAPPEN

By supporting Henry Schein Cares activities with unique resources, these companies are enhancing access to health care around the world.



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## QUESTIONNAIRE



**HEALTHY MOUTHS.**  
Young patients with  
Kids in Need of Dentistry  
(KIND), a Smiles Across  
America partner in  
Denver, CO.

PHOTO: MICHAEL HERRERA



## Actress Tiffani Thiessen advocates for oral health

“White Collar” star, Tiffani Thiessen is helping bring attention to the early gum disease, gingivitis, which affects more than fifty percent of American adults.

### Because of your recent partnership with Crest, are you now more aware about the importance of dental care?

My oral health is important to me and I didn't realize that minor concerns, such as red or swollen gums, could be symptoms that can lead to more serious gum health issues. Now that I am more aware of the symptoms of gingivitis and its implications, I pay more attention to my oral health and hope to help others learn about how they can help prevent and even help reverse gingivitis.

Source: MSLGROUP

# Set an example for children by practicing daily dental care

**D**on't forget to brush your teeth! This is one of first and most frequent health messages we give our children. According to a new public opinion survey commissioned by Oral Health America, seven in ten parents (69 percent) say they remind their children to brush their teeth on a daily basis.

Why then, is tooth decay the number one chronic childhood disease in the United States? Dental-related illness causes children to lose over 51 million school hours, and adults to lose over 164 million work hours each year.

### Changes in oral health can affect overall health

Well, we still have a lot to learn about our mouths.

Most adults (82 percent) are unaware of the role that infectious bacteria can play in mouth diseases. It's true: tooth decay (or cavities) and gum disease are caused by germs that we can pass on to family members. Changes in oral health can affect overall health. Research shows that mouth problems are linked to blood sugar problems in diabetics, as well as heart disease, stroke, premature birth, and an increased risk of other infections.

Nearly nine in ten parents say children should brush their teeth twice a day or more. However, just 64 percent of children say they brush their teeth that often. Caring for our mouths requires active partnerships—between parents and children and with our dental care providers. Do not expect children younger than about eight years of age to brush on their own. This is



**Frank Catalanotto, DMD:** Professor and Chair, Department of Community Dentistry and Behavioral Sciences; University of Florida College of Dentistry; Oral Health America Board Member

a life-long practice that can take a number of years to master, so make brushing a fun activity and praise your children for taking care of their mouths.

### Lead by example

It's a fact: having a healthy mouth depends on us practicing good daily dental care habits, keeping regular dental appointments, making healthy food choices, and avoiding tobacco use. Communities have a responsibility too, by recognizing oral health's importance to overall health, and implementing programs and policies that make it possible for everyone to obtain the dental care they need.

Pain from tooth decay can prevent children from sleeping, eating, growing, and paying attention in school. Poor oral health keeps adults from getting jobs.

The mouth is connected to the rest of the body, and according to the U.S. Surgeon General, “you can't be healthy without good oral health.” Speak up for oral health in your community, and the next time you remind your children to brush their teeth, let them know why.

*About Oral Health America: Oral Health America's mission is to change lives by connecting communities with resources to bring healthy mouths to life. OHA's signature program, Smiles Across America assists communities in building school-based and school-linked oral health services for at-risk children and families. Learn more at [www.oralhealthamerica.org](http://www.oralhealthamerica.org) and follow our Tweets at “Smile4Health.”*



# GIVE GINGIVITIS ITS FOUR WEEK NOTICE.



Introducing a toothpaste clinically proven to help reverse gingivitis in just four weeks, putting you on your way to a healthier mouth.

New Crest Pro-Health Clinical Gum Protection. Unlike ordinary toothpaste, it helps eliminate plaque at the gumline, helping prevent gingivitis. It protects these areas dentists check most: cavities, gingivitis, plaque, sensitivity, tartar, whitening, and fresh breath.



## NEWS

TIP

3

UNDERSTAND  
THE CONNECTION  
BETWEEN ORAL  
AND TOTAL BODY  
HEALTH

Gum disease, or periodontitis, is not just about your mouth anymore. Research indicates that it can be connected to, and **seriously impact, total body health**. Periodontal disease is a chronic, bacterial infection. We know that untreated, **it can lead to tooth loss**, but now we know that it can put total health at risk in an alarming variety of ways.

# The systemic connection

## Oral health and overall well being are linked closer than you think.

In September, it was announced that the prevalence of periodontal disease in US adults has been seriously underestimated. The American Academy of Periodontology, along with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, published new data showing that up to 50 percent more adults have gum disease than previously thought.

## Why this is important to you

Periodontal disease has been linked to cardiovascular disease (increasing the risk of heart attack and stroke); diabetes (compromising the ability to control blood sugar); preterm, low-birth-weight babies; stress (which impeded

the ability to fight infection); numerous types of medications (especially those that cause dry mouth); grinding the teeth; and myriad other conditions and scenarios, including genetics, puberty, menopause, chronic kidney disease, Alzheimer's, osteoporosis/osteopenia, head and neck radiation therapy, organ transplant recipients, etc. This doesn't leave too many people out of the equation.

"The by-products of chronic bacterial infection can travel from the mouth throughout the entire body in the blood stream, potentially causing numerous complications," says Miles Hall, DDS, MBA, chief clinical dental director for CIGNA. "If you have periodontitis present around every tooth, it could be the equivalent of having an open sore the size of the palm of your hand. Imagine leaving



Miles Hall, DDS, MBA  
Chief clinical dental director, CIGNA

"The by-products of chronic bacterial infection can travel from the mouth throughout the entire body in the blood stream, potentially causing numerous complications."

that untreated elsewhere on the body."

## The good news

Periodontal disease is preventable and relatively easy to treat. Twice-daily brushing and flossing help keep it under control, and deep cleaning to remove plaque biofilm and tartar can eliminate the

severity and associated risks of this insidious infection.

This increasingly evident total health connection has influenced both physical medicine and how the insurance industry covers treatments. There is a three-time greater risk for diabetics to have gum disease, and a two-fold increase in those with vascular disease. These statistics have led dental insurance companies, including Delta, Aetna, MetLife, WellPoint, and CIGNA, to enhance their dental coverage for higher risk patients, such as those with diabetes, cardiovascular disease, or who are pregnant, to also include stroke, chronic kidney disease, head and neck radiation, and organ transplants. For expectant mothers, CIGNA's Oral Health Integration Program, for example, allows additional cleanings. For other conditions, CIGNA

covers additional services and waives co-insurance or co-pays for related services. Most dental insurance websites offer articles, risk-assessment tools, and educational podcasts on oral health and wellness topics.

"We're now looking at the medical and dental data together," Dr. Hall says. "Our data shows that patients with gum disease who are now receiving regular dental maintenance care can have, on average, significantly lower medical costs."

## The bottom line?

Visit your dentist and dental hygienist. "You need to have regular visits with your dentist," Dr. Hall advises, "and follow his or her recommendations."

ALLISON W. WALKER

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Evidence shows better oral health may help prevent serious health problems. That's why our dental care approach goes beyond cleanings, cavities and crowns, offering services that do more to help you stay healthy.

## People who need more, get more.

We were first to introduce a program that enhances dental coverage for pregnant women, and people with diabetes and heart disease. And as the associations between oral and overall health continue to grow, so does our program - more coverage for clinical care, more wellness information and more savings.\*

Better Smiles. Better Health

Learn more at [cigna.com/dental](http://cigna.com/dental)



\* Features will be available to CIGNA Dental Oral Health Integration Program participants after 1/1/2011.

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# NEWS

Smiling—such a simple, natural thing. If someone is smiling, even if you don't feel like it, you almost physically **can't help smiling back.**

## Improve your smile

**Imagine forcing yourself not to smile, or training yourself to smile in a way that reveals no teeth. Maybe every tooth is discolored or crooked, or maybe there's just one thing you are self-conscious about.**

Lots of people wish every day that they could smile with abandon, without thinking about it, and with all the confidence in the world.

Luckily, improving your smile is very accessible and affordable today. Treatment doesn't have to be extreme; a mini makeover may be simple and inexpensive. The results, including higher self-esteem, professional and social confidence, a more youthful appearance, and improved health, might outweigh any trepidations you have. Cost and length of treatment will vary, but consider it an investment

in yourself—and remember—you are never too old to improve your smile.

### Grin and bare it

It's amazing what cosmetic dentistry can do today, and how painlessly it can be accomplished. Dental technology and materials have come a long way. Teeth can be whitened, lengthened, shortened, straightened, aligned, removed, replaced, and saved. Veneers can be used to cover discolored or oddly shaped teeth. Gum lines can be reshaped with lasers to eliminate a "gummy" smile. Bonding materials can be added to match the shape of neighboring teeth, fix a chip, or hide a filling. Mouth-guard-type aligners can be worn instead of braces to straighten teeth. Braces can be hidden on the backsides of the teeth. Missing bone and tissue can be replaced or regenerated. Dental implants, which used to

require major surgery, can be "placed" into the jaw using precise, computer-designed surgical guides and chewed with almost immediately. Single or multiple implants can be used to replace missing teeth or to support a denture or bridge.

Depending on your needs and desires, simple combinations of these treatments can be truly life changing.

### You're not alone

The American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (AACD) has surveyed its dentist members and found that the baby boomers, ages 41-60, are increasingly seeking cosmetic dental services. The biggest reason why? Appearance. And why not invest in themselves—the boomers are going to be smiling longer than previous generations, and they've earned it!

ALLISON W. WALKER

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### SOCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL BENEFITS

**1** William, a professional athlete, was so self-conscious that he hid his smile behind closed lips. His fast-paced career, limited finances, and fear kept him from seeking treatment for years. Now, however, he says something is "different on the inside" as well as the outside.

**2** Michele was unhappy with her "crooked" smile. She was afraid to commit to orthodontics or surgery because of her corporate position and travel schedule. Today,

after less involved procedures, she feels confident lecturing to groups in the beauty industry.

**3** Sheila swears her improved smile has benefited her professionally: "If you don't feel beautiful or if some flaw is really bothering you, you tend to cocoon yourself. When you fix it, it makes you come alive. This can definitely have an effect on your career. It also applies to your overall health—when you're confident you take better care of yourself."



### QUESTIONNAIRE

#### Why replace missing teeth?

■ When you lose a tooth, the surrounding bone begins to shrink away or resorb and becomes increasingly brittle, compromising adjacent teeth and increasing the chance of a changed appearance. In the case of people with dentures, the bone loss can be even more extreme causing frequent changes to dentures to ensure they fit properly.

#### Are dental implants the most effective



Maggie Anderson  
President,  
BIOMET 3i

#### solution for tooth replacement?

■ Compared to other treatment options to replace missing teeth, such as bridges and removable partials, a dental implant with an implant crown offers a long-lasting solution and is designed to help minimize the amount of bone that would be lost in the areas of missing teeth.



## Providing Solutions One Smile At A Time

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To Find A Dentist Near You.



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