



Bite into good habits this Dental Health Week

Dental Health Week (6–12 August) is a good time to bite into some good oral hygiene habits to make sure you are looking after your whole mouth, not just your teeth!

Dr Kevin Morris, President of the Australian Dental Association Victorian Branch (ADAVB), says that many Victorians don't realise there is a strong connection between having a healthy mouth and general health and wellbeing.

"We need our mouths and teeth to eat, speak, and smile and once there is a problem, this can lead to considerable pain and suffering and affect our quality of life and wellbeing.

"Tooth decay is Australia's most common disease and yet 65% of Australians haven't seen a dentist in the last two years. One in five adults have untreated tooth decay and one in five also have gum disease. Oral cancer rates are also on the rise*.

"With just over half of Australians (52%) brushing once a day instead of the recommended twice daily and nearly two in five (38%) who never floss or clean in between their teeth, this critical.

"We also know that not enough Australians are having preventive dental check-ups, with close to 7 out of 10 (69%) of Australians only going to the dentist when they have a problem," he said.

Dr Morris said that Dental Health Week is the ideal time to start some new habits and the sooner we start the better.

"73% of young people (14-18 years) are consuming too much sugar, so parents should look after their children's oral health and motivate them to care for their teeth and gums to help them stay healthy as they grow older.

"This includes brushing and flossing, eating a healthy diet and lowering sugar and alcohol intakes, stopping smoking and seeing your dentist regularly for a check-up.

"Poor oral health is linked to other health conditions including heart disease and diabetes, so good oral hygiene habits are important to ensure our mouths and teeth take care of us all our lives," he said.

Four tips for good oral health

- Brush twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste
- Clean in between teeth at least once a day with floss or an interdental brush

- Eat a healthy balance diet and limit sugar intake
- Regularly visit the dentist for check-ups and preventive treatment

For more on Dental Health Week, check out: www.dentalhealthweek.com.au

** Australian Dental Association and Australian Health Policy Collaboration in Victoria University, Australia's Oral Health Tracker, March 2018*

Notes to the Editor:

- The Australian Dental Association Victorian Branch (ADAVB) is the peak Victorian professional body representing over 3500 Victorian registered dentists and dentistry students.
- The ADAVB is a not-for-profit professional membership organisation that aims to improve the oral health of Victorians, promotes the highest standards of professional dental care and supports and represents the dental profession.

To arrange an interview with Dr Kevin Morris or for more information on Dental Health Week, please contact:

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