



Join Us to Raise Gum Disease Awareness



#HEALTHYGUMS4HEALTHYLIFE

March is Gum Disease Awareness Month in California

California Society of Periodontists Advises Patients that Maintaining Healthy Gums Improves Overall Health

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Norco, Calif. — The California Society of Periodontists (CSP) reminds the public that March is Periodontal (Gum) Disease Awareness Month in California. Periodontal disease is a bacterial, biofilm-driven inflammatory disease that not only affects the gums, bone and supporting structures of teeth but it is also known to have an adverse impact on overall systemic health as well.

A prime example is the relationship between diabetes and periodontitis (gum disease), which has been extensively examined. *"Studies have shown that periodontitis adversely affects glycemic control in patients with type 2 diabetes, while the treatment of periodontitis can improve glycemic control"* said Dr. Erik Sahl, CSP President. In a longitudinal study of patients with diabetes, severe periodontitis was associated with significant worsening of glycemic control over time compared to those without periodontitis. Conversely, studies have demonstrated that improving periodontal health is associated with significantly improved glycemic control. The therapeutic goal for managing diabetes is lowering HbA1c (standard of care blood test) below 7%.

The American Diabetes Association has officially recognized that gum disease is a common problem for patients with diabetes and revised their Standards of Medical Care to include taking a history of past dental infections and referral to a dentist for a comprehensive periodontal examination. The prevalence of diabetes for American adults (18 years and older) is 34.1 million or 13%. About 7.3 million or 21.4% of these individuals are undiagnosed. For older individuals (65 years and older), the prevalence of diabetes is 26.8% with 5.4% of them being undiagnosed. Approximately 88 million American adults have prediabetes.

A recent National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) of the US adult population reported that 47.2% of adults (30 years and older) and 70.1% of older adults (65 years and older) have periodontal disease and many are not aware of their condition because it does not typically cause discomfort or pain. Symptoms of periodontal disease may include some or all of the following: red or swollen gums, bleeding when brushing or flossing, bad breath or bad taste, loose or shifting teeth.

The CSP urges everyone, especially older adults and those in high-risk groups including patients with diabetes, immune disorders, rheumatoid arthritis, and smokers to seek professional dental care for diagnosis and treatment of gum disease. The public is also encouraged to join CSP in raising awareness by using hashtag **#healthygums4healthylife** on social media and taking the gum disease self-assessment at calperio.org.

About Periodontal/Gum Disease Awareness Month in California

In 2017, the California state legislature passed Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 19 recognizing March as Periodontal / Gum Disease Awareness Month in California, through the joint efforts of the California Society of Periodontists and the California Dental Hygienists' Association.

About the California Society of Periodontists

The California Society of Periodontists is a non-profit organization comprised of dentists who specialize in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases affecting the gums and tooth supporting structures including the placement and maintenance of dental implants. For more information, visit calperio.org.

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