
On 20th March 2016, over a million dentists from 200 organisations based in 130 countries across the world will join together with FDI World Dental Federation (FDI) to celebrate World Oral Health Day, turning the global spotlight to the importance of maintaining good oral health.

Already, over 40 countries from across five continents have recorded their pledge to help improve oral health across the globe and reveal what good oral health means to them. These pledges, containing practical oral care advice, are available to view on the World Oral Health Day website in order to inspire and encourage others to improve their oral care regime.

Behind these celebrations is a serious message. Poor oral health has been associated with a number of health conditions such as:

- Heart disease
- Pancreatic cancer
- Pneumonia
- Lung disease

There is an indicated link between good oral health and overall health: In one study 40% of people with serious gum disease also reported suffering from an additional chronic condition.

World Oral Health Day 2016 aims to educate people that good oral health goes beyond having a nice smile – it is fundamentally intertwined with overall well-being.

To further encourage participation in World Oral Health Day and spread this message, FDI has created its first ever smartphone game. Mad Mouts challenges players to ‘brush’ away as many plaque bugs and foods as they can before their game time runs out – reiterating the many benefits of brushing teeth. Oral care tips which appear throughout the game improve oral care understanding, enabling more people than ever before to interact with dental advice.
FDI President Dr Patrick Hescot says: “We are very excited to launch this landmark campaign, which educates people across the world on the importance of looking after their oral health – not just for the sake of their smile, but for their overall well-being. Our innovative new smartphone game, launching on World Oral Health Day, is a way of engaging people of all ages across the globe and providing practical oral care advice in a new and exciting format.”

Dentist Dr Edoardo Cavallè says: “Oral diseases affect 3.9 billion people worldwide, with between 60% and 90% of children globally suffering from tooth decay. Yet there is a lack of understanding of the key role that oral health plays in our overall health; simple steps such as brushing twice daily for two minutes, needs to be integrated into all our oral care routines. World Oral Health Day is a fantastic opportunity for the dental community to make a real difference in the state of oral health across the globe.”

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About World Oral Health Day: World Oral Health Day (WOHD) is celebrated every year on 20 March. It is an international day to celebrate the benefits of a healthy mouth and to promote worldwide awareness of the importance of oral hygiene. World Oral Health Day 2016 aims to get everyone to recognise the impact their oral health has on their overall physical health and well-being.

About FDI World Dental Federation: FDI World Dental Federation (‘FDI’) serves as the principal representative body for more than one million dentists worldwide, developing health policy and continuing education programmes, speaking as a unified voice for dentistry in international advocacy and supporting member associations in global oral health promotion activities. FDI membership comprises some 200 member national dental associations in over 130 countries. FDI was founded in Paris in 1900. Today, its headquarters are in Geneva, Switzerland.

Global partners:

Henry Schein
Henry Schein, Inc. (NASDAQ:HSIC) is the world’s largest provider of health care products and services to office-based dental, animal health and medical practitioners.

Royal Philips
Royal Philips (NYSE: PHG, AEX: PHIA) is a diversified health and well-being company, focused on improving people’s lives through meaningful innovation in the areas of Healthcare, Consumer Lifestyle and Lighting.
Unilever
Unilever is one of the world’s leading suppliers of Food, Home and Personal Care products with sales in over 190 countries and reaching 2 billion consumers a day.

Wrigley Oral Healthcare Program
The Wrigley Oral Healthcare Program (WOHP) partners with dental professionals worldwide, helping them improve their patients’ oral health through one extra simple and enjoyable step in their daily routine: chewing sugarfree gum after eating and drinking on-the-go.

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i Van Dyke, TE., Starr, JR. Unraveling the link between Periodontitis and Cardiovascular Disease. December 2013. Available from: http://jaha.ahajournals.org/content/2/6/e000657.short [Last accessed: December 2015]
