

# Breaking Bad Habits

The Canadian Dental Hygienists Association, debunks some common oral health myths, and provides simple tips to maintain a healthy mouth.

**1 If my teeth look great and I feel no pain, then they are healthy (FALSE).**

Often by the time there is pain, advanced disease is present. Early detection of gingivitis, periodontal disease, and caries is important to minimizing lengthy and costly treatments.

**2 Blood in the sink while brushing is normal (FALSE).**

During regular brushing, blood in the sink or a pink toothbrush indicates the presence of inflammation.

**4 The more sugar I eat, the worse off my teeth will be (TRUE).**

The frequency of carbohydrate consumption (sugars and starches) is a risk factor for caries. Grazing, frequent nibbling, and consuming sugar-rich drinks increase the risk of cavities.

**6 Oral cancer is caused only from smoking and drinking (FALSE).**

Tobacco use is the single most important and preventable cause of oral cancer. Other lifestyle and environmental factors that have been

identified as risk factors include alcohol consumption, sun (UV rays), and the human papillomavirus (HPV).

**8 My oral health does not affect my overall health (FALSE).**

A growing body of scientific evidence shows that a healthy mouth contributes to a healthy body. Chronic gum infection is associated with the development of cardiovascular problems such as heart disease, blockages of blood vessels, and strokes; periodontal disease is associated with rheumatoid arthritis. Improvements in oral care that result in a reduction of inflammation enable diabetics to maintain consistent blood sugar levels.

Dental hygienists are primary health care providers who know that good oral health is essential for total health and well-being. To learn more about your oral health or to find a dental hygienist near you visit [dentalhygienecanada.ca](http://dentalhygienecanada.ca).

## Dental Hygienists...

...Your Partners in Prevention for Overall Health

A visit with your dental hygienist today can protect your health for tomorrow. Dental hygienists are your partners in prevention, encouraging you to brush, floss and rinse to protect your oral and overall health.



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