

## Make your dental hygienist a partner in disease prevention



Research shows that unchecked plaque on the teeth can lead to periodontal disease – and that is a risk factor for serious illnesses, such as diabetes, lung and heart diseases, and stroke.

The dental hygienist is highly skilled to examine your mouth, head, and neck. He or she will recommend preventive treatments such as dental sealants or fluoride, and will also give you referrals to a specialist when warranted. A dental hygienist can also custom-fit you with a mouthguard if you're involved in sports where orofacial injury is a risk.

A good pro-active plan for daily oral hygiene is based on six simple steps:

1. Brush your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
2. Floss daily.
3. Rinse with an antiseptic mouthwash once a day.
4. Eat healthy foods and avoid sugary treats.
5. Eliminate tobacco use.
6. Schedule regular dental visits.

Dental hygienists remind us to tap into their expertise as our 'partners in disease prevention'. They work in dental offices, clinics, hospitals, homes, and in the community to ensure good oral health throughout our entire lifespans. This is the cornerstone, they say, of overall physical, social, and mental well-being. If it's time for you to do more for yourself in this regard, additional information is available online at

[www.dentalhygienecanada.ca/](http://www.dentalhygienecanada.ca/)