

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release
April 8, 2008



APRIL is Oral Health Month: A healthy mouth is an important part of a healthy lifestyle.

Oral health problems can reduce quality of life by affecting physical, mental and social well being. The reality is that oral health problems could be a sign of something serious such as oral cancer. Every year approximately 3,200 Canadians are diagnosed with oral cancer and 1,050 die from oral cancer according to the Canadian Dental Association.

The **Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit** encourages you to keep your smile healthy for a lifetime by following these 6 steps to good oral health.

1. Brush your teeth and tongue twice a day using fluoride toothpaste and floss every day.

- Choose oral care products with the Canadian Dental Association Seal of Acceptance - your assurance that the product has met the CDA criteria for safety and effectiveness.

2. Eat a well-balanced diet.

- What you eat and drink and how often can affect your health.

3. Check your mouth regularly for signs of gum disease and oral cancer.

- Early detection is important as early signs of oral cancer are not usually painful and you may not feel any changes - practice self oral exam.

4. Don't smoke or chew tobacco.

- Smoking or chewing tobacco not only causes bad breath but also brings cancer-causing chemicals in direct contact with your tongue, gums and the inside of your cheek.

5. Wear a custom mouthguard when playing sports.

- Wearing a mouthguard helps to prevent broken teeth and injuries to the lips, tongue, face and head.

6. Visit your dentist regularly.

- Regular visits to your dental health professional can help to prevent dental problems with your oral health and over all health.

For more information about good oral health, contact the Health ACTION Line at 1-800-660-5853 or 613-345-5685 or visit is online at www.healthunit.org/dental.

-30-

Contact:

Robin Cleary, RDH, Dental Co-ordinator, 613-345-5685