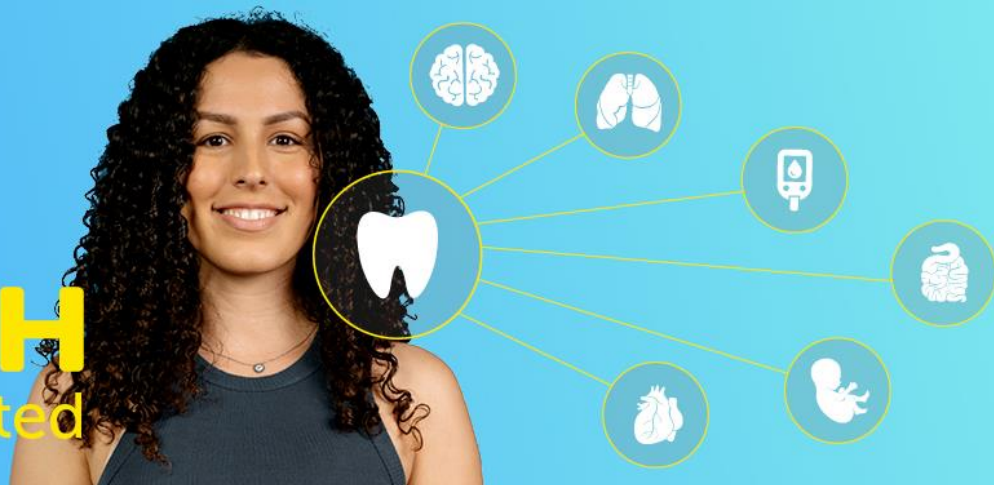


**MIND,
BODY,
MOUTH**
it's all connected



MEDIA RELEASE

EMBARGO:6am, 7th AUGUST

**NEW NATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEALTHY MOUTHS
LAUNCHED BY**

**THE AUSTRALIAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION for
DENTAL HEALTH WEEK (AUGUST 7-13)**

PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA: The nation's dentists today unveiled sweeping new oral health recommendations for the way we should all be managing our mouths, marking the start of Dental Health Week.

The new 11 point oral health charter unveiled this morning (Aug 7) by Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care Ged Kearney along with representatives from the Australian Dental Association (ADA) which funded the review, includes new recommendations on vaping, flossing, alcohol consumption, mouthguard use and the age a child should have their first visit to the dentist.

The Oral Health Messages for Australia - a National Consensus Statement, is an update on existing Statements last drafted in 2009. They reflect the latest science and research which informs the way Australian dentists and other healthcare professionals promote oral health measures from now on.

The updated recommendations (below) are the result of a 12-month long project led by the University Of Melbourne, with input from around 70 experts including dentists, doctors, nurses, policy makers, health promoters and consumer advocates as well as experts in paediatric dentistry, fluoride, medicine, vaping, sports, sugar and a range of other areas.

"There've been so many advancements in the last few years about the effects, for example, of lifestyle habits like vaping and alcohol consumption," said Dr Mihiri Silva, Senior Lecturer, Melbourne Dental School at the University of Melbourne who led the project, "that existing recommendations needed an overhaul to reflect the latest findings and catch up with international guidelines.

"The updated recommendations mean healthcare professionals and policy makers will be on the same page when it comes to promoting oral health measures to patients and consumers, knowing they do so with the latest science behind them."

Media contact:

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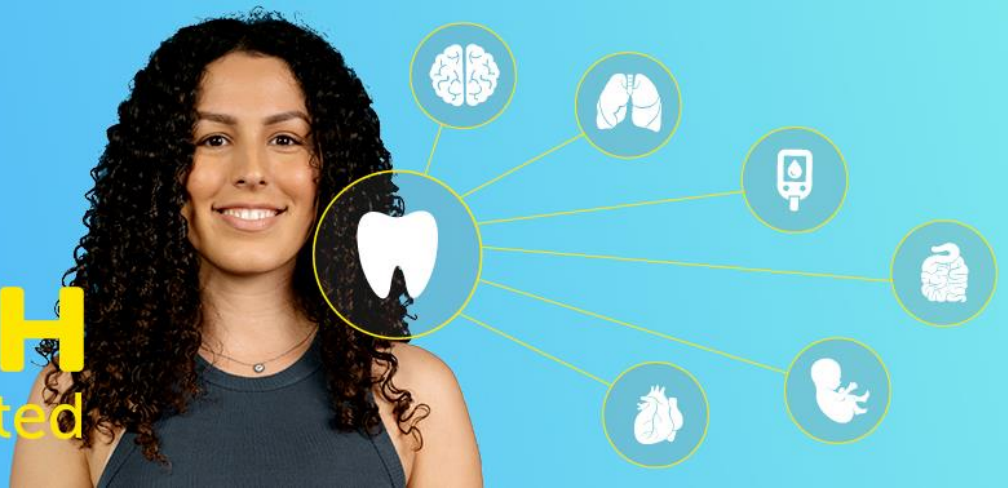
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Dr Silva added: “The updated Statements also reflect the fact that the health of the mouth is closely linked with the health of the body which is the thrust of the ADA’s Dental Health Week campaign this year – ignore your brushing and flossing and it can affect your body health. That’s why there’s a lot of joined up thinking in these measures – it alerts the public to the fact that the mouth and the body don’t work separately.”

The new Oral Health Consensus Statements:

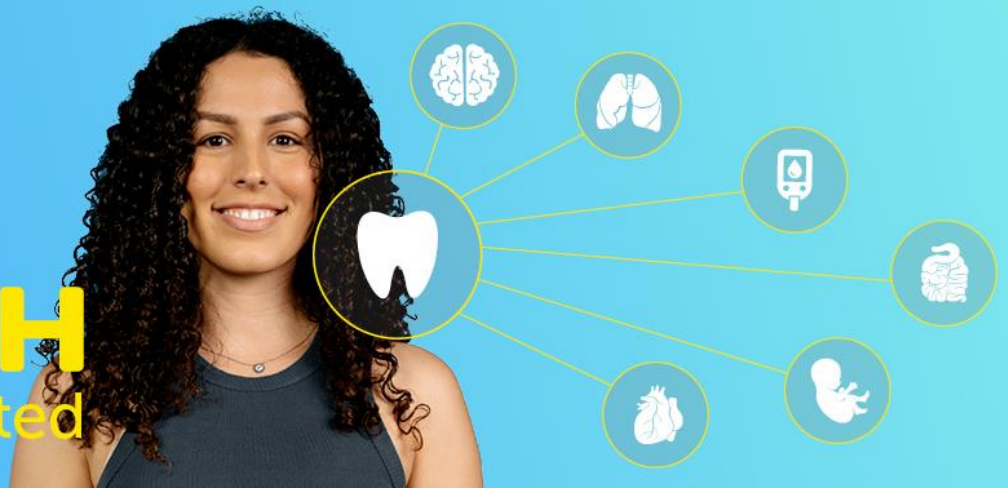
Overall health
1. Oral health is integral to overall health and well-being.
Diet and infant feeding
2. Avoid free sugars (All sugars added to foods and drinks by manufacturer, cook or consumer plus those sugars naturally present in honey syrups, fruit juices and fruit concentrates).
3. Tap water should be fluoridated for optimal oral health.
4. Avoid putting babies and children to bed with a bottle.
Oral hygiene
5. Brush teeth twice a day with fluoridated toothpaste and clean in between teeth daily. Fluoridated toothpaste reduces tooth decay. Additional fluoride therapies may be suitable depending on risk – refer to the Australian Fluoride Guidelines.
6. People who have difficulty cleaning their teeth should be supported.
Mouthguards
7. Custom-made mouthguards should be worn for all sports and training where there is a reasonable risk of a mouth injury.
Dental check-ups
8. Regular professional dental check-ups are important throughout life, starting from the eruption of the first tooth.
9. Everyone has different oral health needs and risk levels which should be reflected in the frequency of check-ups.
Smoking and vaping
10. Smoking, vaping and tobacco products, including e-cigarettes and chewing tobacco, are harmful to oral health.

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Alcohol

11. Alcohol consumption is harmful to oral health.

To interview Dr Mihiri Silva about the new Consensus Statements or ADA President Dr Stephen Liew about this and /or Dental Health Week, contact ADA Media Advisor Jenny Barlass on 0484 869 086.

Note to editors:

The Oral Health Consensus Statement Review was conducted by the University of Melbourne School of Dentistry in 2022-2023, in a project funded by the ADA. The Review was led by Dr Mihiri Silva, and was informed by an expert advisory committee and a larger group of around 70 Australian specialists from a wide range of healthcare disciplines.

Consensus was agreed on a set of 11 health messages for oral health which complement those for general health following literature reviews and discussion at a national workshop. Details about the project are available at : <https://dental.unimelb.edu.au/news-and-events/oral-health-messages-for-the-australian-public-2022-update>

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