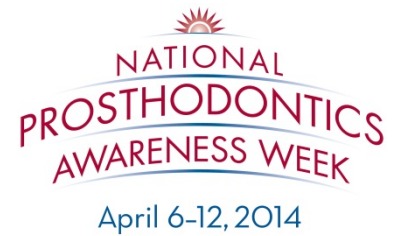




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National Prosthodontics Awareness Week Is April 6-12, 2014

American College of Prosthodontists: Missing teeth need to be treated as a chronic medical condition like diabetes, high cholesterol or heart disease

[Chicago]—**National Prosthodontics Awareness Week (NPAW)** is April 6-12, 2014. With 178 million people in the U.S. missing at least one tooth and 33 million Americans having no natural teeth, NPAW aims to increase awareness about the importance of proper oral health and prosthodontic solutions to missing teeth.

"As a board certified prosthodontist, people ask me if they have to replace a missing tooth in the back of the mouth since no one can see it. My answer is yes," said NPAW Chair Avinash S. Bidra, B.D.S., M.S., F.A.C.P., of the University of Connecticut School of Dentistry. "When you lose even a single tooth, it will result in bone loss, change the bite, cause food impaction and result in adjacent teeth moving towards the missing space. The longer one waits to get it replaced, the more challenging the clinical situation is, yet if you fix it fast the cycle stops."

Prosthodontics is one of only nine recognized dental specialties by the American Dental Association (ADA), and prosthodontists are dental specialists with three years of advanced residency training beyond dental school in replacement of missing teeth and oral health issues. The American College of Prosthodontists (ACP) is the ADA recognized association that represents and advocates on behalf of prosthodontists.

To celebrate NPAW, the ACP is providing free access to two *Journal of Prosthodontics* studies on innovative science and treatment for missing teeth. The first, [a recent Mayo Clinic long-term \(29 years\) retrospective study](#), reveals that care for missing teeth needs to be treated as a "chronic condition" much like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease or diabetes.

"The chronic condition of missing teeth affects one's quality of life from eating nutritious foods to enjoying social activities. People think that once we place a dental implant and crown no follow up care is needed, yet it is. In fact, research finds that implant therapy to replace the missing teeth requires lifelong follow up with your prosthodontist or dentist to minimize the risks of complications such as

chipping or loss of implants due to infections” said Matilda Dhima, D.M.D., who is primary author of the study and assistant professor at the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine.

That’s why patients with dental implants are encouraged to make regular visits to their prosthodontists or dentists to minimize the risks of complications (chipping or loss of implants due to infections) and to ensure long-term survival of their complex dental restorations and implants.

The second study [presents data on the popular All-on-Four™ Protocol](#) as a viable alternative to more extensive treatment plans for missing teeth.

“In this protocol, a set of fixed upper and/or lower replacement teeth can be anchored to the bone in one office visit,” said Dr. Bidra.

[The American College of Prosthodontists is making these articles available free](#) to consumers during NPAW. To learn more about personalized options for replacing missing teeth, consumers are encouraged to find and consult their local prosthodontist ([GoToAPro.org](#)).

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About the American College of Prosthodontists

The American College of Prosthodontists, based in Chicago, is the ADA-recognized professional association of prosthodontists and related dental professionals that is dedicated to improving patient care and outcomes, furthering the specialty of prosthodontics. For more information or to find a prosthodontist, visit [GoToAPro.org](#).

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