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Prosthodontists to Patients: Beat the Odds of Do-It-Again Dentistry for World Oral Health Day

The secret is out: Restored teeth require even more care and maintenance than natural teeth

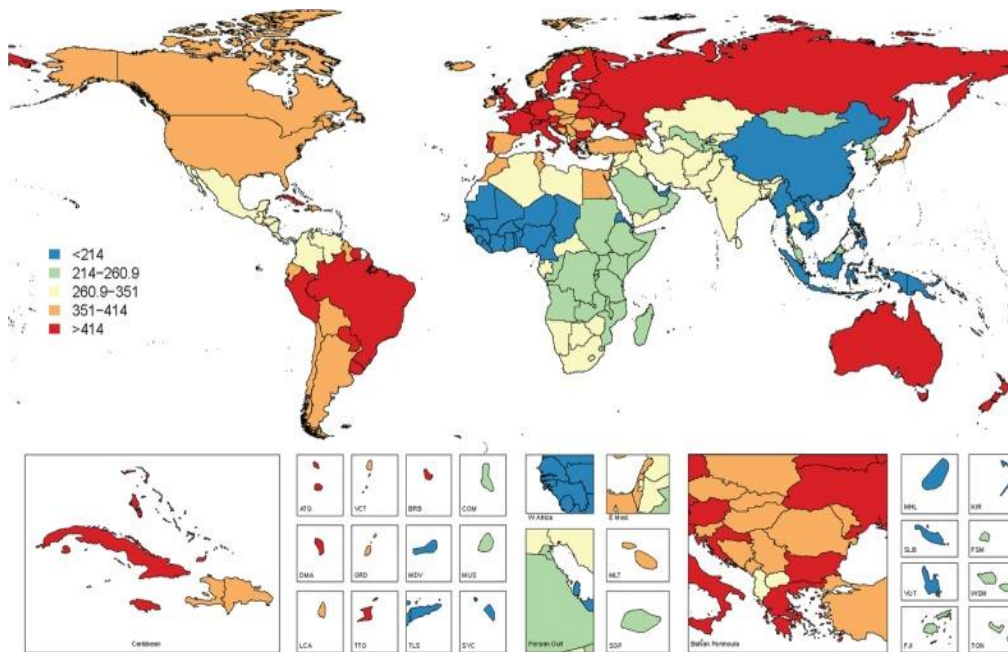


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CHICAGO – Prosthodontists recommend patients celebrate World Oral Health Day on March 20 by beating the odds of do-it-again dentistry by adopting 6 tips to care for their restored teeth. The time is now, and here’s why.

The National Institutes of Health estimate that 158 million people worldwide have no teeth and 120 million Americans are missing one or more teeth according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) NHANES data. Figure 1 shows the worldwide distribution of severe tooth loss incidence per 100,000 persons.

Many of these individuals are treated with restorations including crowns, bridges, or veneers supported by natural tooth structure or by implant-supported restorations. The best way to care for and maintain these dental restorations, however, has remained unclear until now.

The American College of Prosthodontists (ACP) is bringing some clarity to the situation with prosthodontists presenting new recommendations from leaders across oral health – prosthodontists, general dentists, and dental hygienists during the American Association for Dental Research (AADR) Annual Meeting on March 17 in Los Angeles and continuing with public education in honor of World Health Day on Sunday, March 20.

The [first Clinical Practice Guidelines for Patients with Dental Restorations](#), featured in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Prosthodontics*, aim to keep restored teeth healthy and strong through lifelong recall and maintenance.

The new guidelines are actually simpler than one might think, recommending that patients with restorations visit their dentist at least every six months for clinical examinations to clean, adjust, repair, and/or replace their restorations. The most significant detail is that they urge practitioners to follow a personalized regimen for professional maintenance and to educate patients on how best to care for restorations at home.

“If you don’t take care of your restored teeth, you are at risk of losing them and your investment,” said board certified Prosthodontist Lily T. Garcia, DDS, MS, FACP, who is vice chair of the ACP Education Foundation.

“In fact, a recent 17-year retrospective study has shown that the risk of dental implant failure rate is 90% less in patients who actively participate in a maintenance program as compared to patients who do not,” points out board certified prosthodontist Donald A. Curtis, DMD, FACP, of UCSF School of Dentistry, who sees patients in his private practice in Berkeley, Calif., and served as senior investigator. “The science is staggering.”

Over 14 months, Dr. Curtis put the science through rigorous vetting and testing along with lead researcher, board certified prosthodontist Avinash S. Bidra, BDS, MS, FACP, of the UConn School of Dental Medicine.

These baseline clinical practice guidelines on recall and maintenance now serve as a roadmap to keep restored teeth, and surrounding tissue (gums, bone) healthy and your crowns, bridges, and veneers looking as natural and beautiful throughout the years.

To maintain your teeth restorations or implant restorations at home, Prosthodontist Dr. Avinash Bidra summed up the guidelines to *UConn Today* in 6 simple steps:

1. Obtain a dental examination and cleaning at least every 6 months.
2. Follow your dentist’s tailored at-home maintenance recommendations.
3. Brush your teeth with a fluoride-containing toothpaste at least twice a day.
4. Floss your teeth at least once a day.
5. Use a mouthwash recommended by your dentist.
6. Wear a night guard regularly if recommended by your dentist to protect your restorations.

He adds 2 additional tips that are important:

1. Do not smoke or chew tobacco.
2. Watch your diet closely and avoid a high-sugar diet.

The new guidelines were developed from an ACP led scientific panel of experts appointed by the American College of Prosthodontists, American Dental Association, Academy of General Dentistry and the American Dental Hygienists Association who all critically evaluated and debated findings from two comprehensive systematic reviews covering 10 to 15 years of research literature.

The new guidelines couldn't have come at a better time according to prosthodontist and ACP President, Carl Driscoll, DMD, FACP. “As people live longer, so do their dental restorations,” said Dr. Driscoll. “No patient wants to go through the treatment, expense and process getting a ‘new’ tooth again due to a lack of regular professional and at-home maintenance.”

Until now, there have been no clear, evidence-based guidelines in place for dental professionals to help patients who have these types of restorations.

Prosthodontists are specialized dentists with advanced training in oral health issues, who are committed to improving patient outcomes. From implants, crowns, veneers and tooth whitening, to full-mouth reconstruction, Prosthodontists specialize in [digital dentistry](#), [cosmetic dentistry](#), and [sleep apnea](#) solutions.

The ACP is the only prosthodontic specialty organization whose membership is based solely on education credentials. ACP members must be in or have completed an ADA-accredited advanced education program in Prosthodontics.

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About the ACP

The American College of Prosthodontists (ACP) is the official sponsoring organization for the specialty of Prosthodontics, which is one of only nine recognized specialties of the American Dental Association. Founded in 1970, ACP is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to enhancing patient care, advancing the art and science of Prosthodontics, promoting the specialty of Prosthodontics to the public and other dentists and healthcare professionals, ensuring the quality of prosthodontic education and providing professional services to its membership. For more information, professionals may visit Prosthodontics.org, and consumers can learn more at GoToAPro.org.

About National Prosthodontics Awareness Week (NPAW)

During NPAW, April 3-9, prosthodontists nationwide will be hosting free events including oral health screenings, lectures, community service outreach and other activities to raise the public's awareness about the importance of a healthy mouth and the benefits of seeing a prosthodontist. As a way of giving back to the oral health community to celebrate National Prosthodontics Awareness Week (NPAW), the American College of Prosthodontists (ACP) is offering FREE access to selected scientific research published in ACP's peer-reviewed *Journal of Prosthodontics*. Free access to research helps dental professionals improve patient outcomes.

Access Links to free selected *Journal of Prosthodontics* Research:

[Complete Edentulism and Comorbid Diseases: An Update](#)

[Special Issue: ACP Clinical Practice Guidelines: Recall and Maintenance of Patients with Tooth-Borne and Implant-Borne Dental Restorations.](#)