

## Oral Health Care is Essential for Promoting Overall Health

*A Message from the OHNEP Team*

OHNEP is a national voice for interprofessional oral health education and practice, and aims to improve the integration of oral health care across the U.S. and beyond. Our research and advocacy promotes the importance of oral-systemic health and the need to incorporate oral health as an essential component of overall health.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recently released a statement about oral health care, advising that dental cleanings, preventive dental care and other non-urgent dental services be delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

***Respectfully, OHNEP disagrees with the position of the World Health Organization on delaying oral health care.***

During the COVID-19 pandemic, promoting oral hygiene and timely dental care is more important than ever. Many people have lost medical and dental benefits due to job furloughs and terminations. Untreated oral health problems, such as periodontal disease and dental caries, can lead to major systemic health problems beyond the mouth.

Dental offices have reopened with proper PPE, and patients have been able to safely visit their dentist. There have been no reports of significant increases in coronavirus cases related to reopening of dental offices. As long as proper precautions are taken, Americans can safely schedule their necessary dental appointments.

We encourage you to review our health literacy oral health and hygiene tip sheet, *Caring for Your Teeth During COVID-19*, by clicking the button below. This sheet can be shared with colleagues, clinical partners, students, and patients to remind them about the importance of taking care of oral health as a vital link to overall health.

[Click here to view tip sheet](#)



Oral Health Nursing Education and Practice Initiative (OHNEP)  
433 First Ave, 6th Floor  
New York, New York 10010 US  
[OHNEP.org](http://OHNEP.org)

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