September Is National Gum Care Month: Reed Family Dentistry Encourages Americans to Prioritize the Health of Their Gums

MEMPHIS, TN, UNITED STATES, September 17, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- September marks National Gum Care Month, an opportunity to remind Americans that healthy gums are an essential part of a healthy smile and overall well-being. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly half of U.S. adults have some form of periodontal disease, while gum disease remains the leading cause of tooth loss among adults.

At Reed Family Dentistry, father-and-son dentists Dr. Kevin Reed and Dr. Taylor Reed encourage patients to use September as a reminder to take a closer look at their gum health and establish habits that can help prevent disease before it becomes more serious.

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>
> *Dr. Kevin Reed, Reed Family Dentistry*

"Gum disease can develop gradually, and many people don't realize there's a problem until they've already experienced significant damage," said Dr. Kevin Reed. "The good news is that gingivitis is the earliest stage of gum disease and is often preventable and, when caught early, can usually be managed with professional care and improved oral hygiene. In fact, prevention of gum disease starts at home."

Gingivitis occurs when plaque (a sticky film of bacteria) builds up along the gumline, causing inflammation. Without proper care, gingivitis can progress to periodontitis, a more advanced form of gum disease that can damage the tissues and bone supporting the teeth.
Patients can help prevent gingivitis by:

*Brushing their teeth twice a day for two minutes with a soft-bristled toothbrush.
*Cleaning between the teeth daily with dental floss or another dentist-recommended interdental cleaner.
*Using an antimicrobial or fluoride mouthwash when appropriate.
*Replacing a toothbrush or toothbrush head approximately every three to four months, or sooner if the bristles become frayed.
*Maintaining regular dental examinations and professional cleanings.

With offices in Covington, TN and Millington, TN, Reed Family Dentistry is a third-generation, family-owned practice providing preventative, restorative, cosmetic, periodontal care and more.

“While brushing is important, it isn't the whole picture,” said Dr. Taylor Reed. “Plaque and bacteria can accumulate in places a toothbrush can't reach, particularly between the teeth and along the gumline. That's why daily cleaning between your teeth is so important.”

The practice is led by father and son dentists, Dr. Kevin Reed and Dr. Taylor Reed who attribute their longevity to the values instilled by Dr. Loyd Reed, community support, and advanced training through The Pankey Institute.

One of the most important aspects of gum care is recognizing potential problems early. The Reeds note that patients should talk with their dentist if they experience symptoms such as:
*Bad breath that doesn't go away
*Red, swollen or tender gums
*Gums that bleed during brushing or flossing
*Gums that appear to be pulling away or receding from the teeth
*Increased tooth sensitivity
*Teeth that feel loose or have shifted
*Pain or discomfort when chewing
*Changes in the way teeth fit together when biting

“Bleeding gums aren't something you should simply accept as normal,” Dr. Taylor Reed said. “If your gums consistently bleed when you brush or floss, that's a reason to have them evaluated.

Addressing inflammation early is much easier than treating advanced gum disease later."

A consistent oral-care routine can make a significant difference in gum health. Dentists generally recommend brushing gently along the gumline rather than scrubbing aggressively, which can irritate the gums. Patients should use a soft-bristled toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste unless their dentist recommends another option. When flossing, patients should gently guide the floss between the teeth and curve it around each tooth, moving it up and down along the sides rather than snapping it into the gums. Water flossers and interdental brushes are also highly effective options for certain patients.

Mouthwash can provide an additional benefit, but it should complement and not replace brushing and cleaning between the teeth. Patients with specific gum-health concerns should ask their dentist which type of mouthwash is appropriate for them.

"There's no one-size-fits-all oral-care routine," said Dr. Kevin Reed. "Some patients may benefit from a particular toothpaste, mouth rinse, water flosser or interdental brush based on their individual needs. That's one reason we encourage patients to discuss their home-care routine with their dental team."

What people eat and drink can also influence oral health. A nutrient-rich, balanced diet that includes vegetables, fruits, lean proteins, whole grains and other nutrient-dense foods can provide the vitamins and minerals the body needs to support healthy tissues and the immune system. Staying properly hydrated is also important. Drinking water can help rinse away food particles and support saliva production, while limiting frequent consumption of sugary foods and beverages can help reduce the conditions that contribute to oral-health problems.

"Your mouth is part of your body, so nutrition matters," Dr. Taylor Reed said. "A balanced diet and good hydration support the body's ability to maintain healthy gums and fight inflammation. It's another example of how everyday choices can contribute to long-term oral health."

Smoking and tobacco use can significantly increase the risk of gum disease. Tobacco can impair the body's ability to fight infection and heal damaged gum tissue, making gum disease more difficult to prevent and treat. Smoking can also mask symptoms such as bleeding gums, potentially allowing periodontal disease to progress without obvious warning signs. For patients who smoke or use tobacco products, quitting is one of the most important steps they can take to protect their oral and overall health.

The importance of gum care extends beyond the mouth. Research has found associations between periodontal disease and a number of systemic health conditions, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes and respiratory problems. Poor oral health has also been associated with cognitive health concerns.

"Oral health and overall health aren't separate conversations," Dr. Kevin Reed said. "The mouth is

connected to the rest of the body, and chronic inflammation and infection in the mouth can have broader implications for a person's health. Taking care of your gums is an investment in more than just keeping your teeth."

Dr. Taylor Reed agrees that prevention is one of the most important messages behind National Gum Care Month.

"September is a great time to ask yourself a simple question: How healthy are my gums?" he said. "If it's been a while since your last dental visit, or you're noticing bleeding, swelling, sensitivity or other changes, don't wait for the problem to get worse. Early attention can make a meaningful difference."

National Gum Care Month serves as an annual reminder that healthy gums are achievable through consistent home care, healthy lifestyle choices and regular professional dental care. Reed Family Dentistry encourages patients to make gum health a priority not just in September, but throughout the year.

About Reed Family Dentistry:
For more than 75 years, Reed Family Dentistry has served as a premier dental practice dedicated to treating people, not just teeth. With offices in Covington, TN and Millington, TN, Reed Family Dentistry was founded in 1949 by Dr. Loyd Reed and is now a third-generation, family-owned practice providing a wide array of dental services including preventative, restorative, cosmetic, periodontal care and more. The practice is led by father and son dentists, Dr. Kevin Reed and Dr. Taylor Reed who attribute their longevity to the values instilled by the practice's founder, the support of the local community, and advanced training through the internationally recognized Pankey Institute . For more information, visit https://reedfamilydentistry.com/.

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