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## **Truth or Myth? Global survey for World Oral Health Day exposes the truth about our oral health habits**

World Oral Health Day 2017 © World Dental Federation

**Geneva, Switzerland, 20 March 2017** – Today on World Oral Health Day, FDI World Dental Federation is myth busting what people around the world believe to be good oral health practices, encouraging them to become better informed and take action. Oral health is integral to our general health and well-being; impacting every aspect of our lives.

The results from a survey carried out in 12 countries, by YouGov on behalf of FDI, exposed a significant gap between what people believe to be good oral health practices, versus what they actually do. Eight of the countries reported that 50 percent or more of the people surveyed think it is important to brush your teeth straight after every main meal. Brazil, Mexico, Egypt and Poland were the worst offenders of this incorrect oral health practice (84%, 81%, 62% and 60% respectively). FDI recommends waiting at least 30 minutes after eating to brush your teeth to avoid weakening tooth enamel. *“These survey results highlight an alarming discrepancy between knowledge and actual good oral health practices,”* said Dr Patrick Hescot, FDI President,

*“We want everyone to take control of their oral health this World Oral Health Day and understand that by adopting good oral hygiene habits, avoiding risk factors and having a regular dental check-up, they can help protect their mouths. A healthy mouth allows us to speak, smile, smell, taste, touch, chew, swallow and convey a range of emotions with confidence and without pain, discomfort and disease. Good oral health matters and translates to a better quality of life.”*

The majority of countries surveyed incorrectly believe that rinsing the mouth out with water after brushing is important; Brazil, South Africa, Mexico, India and Canada were found to practice this myth the most (77%, 75%, 73%, 67% and 67% respectively). It is actually recommended not to rinse with water straight after brushing to allow maximum exposure to fluoride, which will optimize the preventative effects.

Nearly half the population surveyed in India, South Africa, Brazil and Poland (52%, 49%, 48% and 42% respectively), felt that drinking fruit juice rather than fizzy drinks was important for good oral health. Fruit juice however, can also be high in sugar which can cause tooth decay. FDI recommends keeping consumption of sugary drinks to a minimum as part of a healthy, balanced diet.

Dr Edoardo Cavalle, WOHD Task Team Chair, stated *“Understanding good oral health practices and adopting them early in life, will help to maintain optimal oral health into old age and ensure you live a long life free from physical pain and often emotional suffering caused by oral disease.”*

## [About World Oral Health Day](#) [1]

Celebrated annually on 20 March, World Oral Health Day (WOHD) was launched by FDI World Dental Federation to raise global awareness on the prevention and control of oral disease; #WOHD17 #LiveMouthSmart

WOHD Global Partners: Henry Schein, Philips Sonicare, Unilever

## [About FDI World Dental Federation](#) [2]

FDI World Dental Federation serves as the principal representative body for over 1 million dentists worldwide. Its membership includes some 200 national member associations and specialist groups in over 130 countries. FDI's vision: 'leading the world to optimal oral health'; [Facebook](#) [3]; [Twitter](#) [4]

## About the Survey

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 12849 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 20th and 31st January 2017. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are nationally representative of all adults aged 18+ in GB (2090), the US (1145), Australia (1018), New Zealand (1055), Japan (1006) and Canada (1002); nationally representative, based around areas of all adults aged 18+ in Brazil (1000), Mexico (1006), Poland (1004) and South Africa (500); urban representative of all adults aged 18+ in India (1011) and Egypt (1012).

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[2] <http://www.fdiworldental.org>

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