AAP SUPPORTS THE INTERNATIONAL DIABETES FEDERATION GUIDELINE ON ORAL HEALTH FOR PEOPLE WITH DIABETES

CHICAGO—November 3, 2009—Clinical guidelines from the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) emphasize the importance of periodontal health for people with diabetes. Diabetes affects approximately 285 million people worldwide, and this number is only expected to increase. The IDF is an organization of 200 national diabetes associations from 160 countries.

The IDF oral health clinical guideline supports what research has already suggested: that management of periodontal disease—which affects the gums and other supporting tissues around the teeth—can help reduce the risk of developing diabetes and can also help people with diabetes control their blood sugar levels. Studies have suggested there is a two-way relationship between diabetes and periodontal disease, and the IDF guideline outlines helpful guidance for health professionals who treat people living with and at risk for diabetes.

The IDF guideline contains clinical recommendations on periodontal care, written in collaboration with the World Dental Federation (FDI), that encourage health professionals to conduct annual inquiries for symptoms of periodontal disease such as swollen or red gums, or bleeding during tooth brushing; and to educate their patients with diabetes about the implications of the condition on oral health, and especially periodontal health.

“Everyone should maintain healthy teeth and gums to avoid periodontal disease, but people with diabetes should pay extra attention,” said Samuel Low, DDS, MS, Associate Dean and professor of periodontology at the University of Florida College of Dentistry, and President of the American Academy ofPeriodontology (AAP). “Periodontal disease triggers the body’s inflammatory response which can affect insulin sensitivity and ultimately lead to unhealthy blood sugar levels. Establishing routine periodontal care is one way to help keep diabetes under control.”

In recognition of American Diabetes Month, the American Academy of Periodontology commends the International Diabetes Federation on the release of the Guideline on Oral Health for People with Diabetes, and supports its encouragement of continued collaboration and communication between diabetes and oral healthcare professionals.

In addition to helping increase awareness about the importance of oral care for people with diabetes, Dr. Low believes the guideline presents more opportunities for medicine and dentistry to work together. “I know that these clinical recommendations will be helpful for those professionals who work with and treat people with diabetes. I also encourage the medical and dental communities to work together to provide the best possible care for our patients.”

Source: American Academy of Periodontology, <http://www.perio.org/consumer/diabetes-guidelines.htm>