



PHILIPS

DRAFT

For Immediate Release
May 15, 2008

CONTACT: Liz Rogers, (207) 771-8824
liz@oralhealthamerica.org

NEW SURVEY SHOWS AMERICANS VALUE ORAL HEALTH BUT KNOWLEDGE GAP REMAINS

Oral Health America Launches National Smile Month on May 18

CHICAGO, May 15, 2008—Oral health is a top health priority for 64 percent of adults in the United States right now, but even more adults (82 percent) are unaware of the role that infectious bacteria can play in tooth decay, or cavities, according to a new public opinion survey sponsored by Oral Health America and Philips Sonicare. The survey, conducted by Harris Interactive®, is part of the first-ever U.S. National Smile Month, from May 18 to June 17. National Smile Month aims to raise awareness of the importance of good oral health habits, including brushing, healthy food choices, and regular dental visits. The National Smile Month “Brush for Health!” theme focuses on raising public awareness about the connection between oral care and overall health.

“The survey results make it clear that Americans know the benefits of dental care, but lack a greater understanding of the disease processes that can cause tooth decay,” says Robert Klaus, President and CEO of Oral Health America. “This means that there are still significant opportunities to educate the public.”

The survey results indicate overall good news about the oral care habits of adults in the United States. On average, adults say they brush their teeth for the recommended two minutes. Adults who brush their teeth say they are more likely to do so for two minutes on weekdays (59 percent), rather than on weekends (23 percent), highlighting the importance of a seven-day-a-week routine. In an interesting twist, 41 percent agree that, if asked by their dentist, they would say they always brush for the recommended amount of time, even if it isn’t true or they aren’t sure. A majority (70 percent) of adults who brush on a daily basis report that they replace their manual toothbrush or power toothbrush head once every three months, or more often. Regular replacement of tooth brushes or brush heads is important since bristles wear out and can become less effective at cleaning teeth and gums.

On a related note, many dental professionals are talking with their patients about the connection between oral health and overall health. Nearly half (49 percent) of adults say their dental professional asked about overall health at their last dental appointment. In comparison, only 23 percent say that their primary care physician or internist asked about their oral health at their last appointment.

“By empowering people with information about good oral care habits, we can help prevent painful and costly dental problems, and potentially impact overall health,” adds Klaus. “During National Smile Month and throughout the year, we encourage people to talk to both their dentist and doctor about the connection between oral and overall health.”

Oral Health America is the nation’s premier, independent advocacy organization dedicated to improving oral health. The National Smile Month Survey was conducted by telephone within the United States by Harris Interactive on behalf of Oral Health America and Philips Sonicare between May 1 and May 4, 2008 among 1,001 adults ages 18 years and older. A full methodology is available. National Smile Month comprises a variety of initiatives to raise awareness about the connection between oral health and overall health. A simultaneous campaign is running in the United Kingdom through the British Dental Health Foundation. More information is available at www.nationalsmilemonth.org and www.oralhealthamerica.org.

About Philips Sonicare

The Philips Sonicare brand is not only a leader in oral health care innovation, but is also backed by more than 140 publications and abstracts representing clinical and laboratory studies conducted at more than 40 universities and research institutes worldwide. Philips Sonicare power toothbrushes are proven to promote and improve oral health, from reducing plaque biofilm build-up to improving overall gum health and have demonstrated the ability to encourage more consistent brushing between dental visits. Philips Sonicare is the number-one power toothbrush brand recommended by U.S. dental professionals. More information is available at www.sonicare.com.

#