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A CPTV Original Production
CPTV Examines the Importance of Oral Health on the
Body in *Critical Call for Oral Health* Premiering
Thursday, June 26 at 9 p.m.
(Repeat Broadcast: Monday, June 30 at 11 p.m.)

Hartford, Conn. (June 10, 2008) – A smile is one of the most universally recognizable facial expressions, helping to depict an individual’s happiness, confidence, attractiveness, sociability and sincerity. Infections in the mouth not only impact our ability to socialize, but it can negatively impact our confidence and more importantly play havoc on the overall health in our body. CPTV’s *Critical Call for Oral Health*, airing on Thursday, June 26 at 9 p.m., with a repeat episode on Monday, June 30 at 11 p.m., explores the correlation of oral health with overall health.

Periodontitis, which refers to a number of inflammatory diseases that affect the tissues that surround and support a person’s teeth, is caused by bacteria and the body’s reaction to its presence on the tooth’s surfaces. Periodontal bacteria can enter the blood stream and travel to major organs and begin new infections. The bacteria associated with periodontal disease and cavities correlates with serious health problems including, heart disease, diabetes, low birth weight babies and osteoporosis.

Heart disease kills more Americans than cancer. While most people are aware that lifestyle choices such as eating right, getting enough exercise and quitting smoking can help prevent cardiovascular disease, they may not know that by just brushing and flossing their teeth each day, they also might be avoiding the potentially lethal condition that results from heart disease.

“As the number of people with heart disease increases, it is important to know the new research that suggests simple activities like brushing and flossing twice a day, and regular

visits to your dentist can really help lower your risk of other health conditions,” said producer Kim Milbrandt. “It’s not only heart disease – people with diabetes are more likely to have periodontal disease than people without diabetes, probably because diabetics are more susceptible to contracting infections,” she continued.

There is also new research that shows treating a woman’s periodontal disease decreases her chances of having her baby prematurely by almost 50 percent. In addition, new findings suggest that the bacteria that cause periodontal disease can pass through saliva, which means common contact of saliva in families puts children and couples at risk for contracting the periodontal disease of another family member.

“The good news is that diseases of the mouth are the most preventable diseases known to man,” said Milbrandt. “Sometimes the only way to detect periodontal disease or cavities is through a regular dental visit.”

Doctors are now saying a key to awareness and education for the public at large is when the medical community and dental community come together to treat the patient.

“It is critical that our dentists and medical professionals work together when treating a patient,” advises Milbrandt. “This partnership will assure that both the oral and overall health of patients is considered, and the relationship between the mouth and the rest of the body is understood. Treating periodontal disease may be one simple way to decrease total health care costs. Many people don’t have money to go to the dentist regularly, but the cost of not doing so can be so great that a \$100 dental visit is a much cheaper alternative.”

Critical Call for Oral Health is a *Connecting Our Communities* production of CPTV, in partnership with the Connecticut State Dental Association.

“The strength of CPTV programming is based on the relevant, unbiased content, and the trust that viewers have in public television productions,” said Dr. Jonathan Knapp, President of the Connecticut State Dental Association, a general dentist practicing in Bethel, CT. “These qualities are especially significant as the CSDA strives to increase public awareness of the importance of oral health to overall health. Utilizing public

television as the venue for distributing these messages is a natural fit, and we are excited to be a partner in this venture.”

The Connecticut State Dental Association is a statewide, professional membership organization representing Connecticut licensed dentists. CSDA members are committed to being the source of information for its members and the public on issues involving oral health care and its relation to general health; to advocate for access to oral health care for all of the citizens of Connecticut, and to foster collaboration among all stakeholders in oral health. With a statewide membership of almost 2,600 Connecticut licensed dentists, the CSDA represents about 86 percent of all licensed dentists in Connecticut.

CPTV is the public television affiliate of the Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network (CPBN). It is a locally and nationally recognized producer and presenter of quality public television programming, including UConn Women’s Basketball, original documentaries and educational programming. CPTV has the distinction of providing more children’s programming than any other public broadcasting station in the country. CPBN also includes WNPR, an affiliate of National Public Radio, Public Radio International and American Public Media. WNPR serves more than 200,000 listeners in Connecticut, New York and Rhode Island with news and information. WNPR’s award-winning, original local programs include *Where We Live* and *The Faith Middleton Show*. Overall, the network brings a broad spectrum of public affairs, entertainment, sports and educational programming to its viewers, listeners and readers.

Production Credits

Executive Producer: Jay Whitsett, CPTV

Producer: Kim Milbrandt

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