

Media Release

NOBEL BIOCARE UNVEILS RESULTS OF THE LARGEST U.S. CONSUMER DENTAL SURVEY

Survey of Nearly 55,000 Americans Reveals Almost 50 Percent have Missing Teeth and Few Understand the Health Consequences

Demonstrates the Relative Importance of a Healthy Smile vs. Other Physical Features

SAN DIEGO – FEB. 26, 2009 – **Nobel Biocare today announced the results of the largest known consumer survey in dentistry at the 24th Annual Meeting of the Academy of Osseointegration. The survey, which evaluated the responses of nearly 55,000 consumers, provides new insight into the prevalence of missing teeth in America and the general lack of understanding about the health consequences of missing teeth. Importantly, the survey revealed the emphasis consumers place on their smile when considering their overall appearance.**

The survey found that *smile* and *appearance of teeth* scored the highest (first and second, respectively) in terms of importance to personal appearance – exceeding hair, clothes, eyes, facial features and physique. In fact, nearly 90 percent of respondents ranked their *smile* as the most important attribute and almost 87 percent ranked the *appearance of teeth* as the second most important feature.

“As dentists we are very aware of the underlying health issues that can be associated with missing teeth. In this survey, we wanted to better understand how missing teeth affected patients on an emotional level and determine their awareness of the associated consequences,” said Dr. Neil Park, vice president of professional relations, Nobel Biocare. “The results from this survey have provided us with a deeper understanding of the importance of a smile to people, and underscore the need for better consumer education highlighting the consequences of tooth loss and the available treatment options that can increase satisfaction.”

The survey revealed that nearly 50 percent of adults are missing at least one tooth. While most adults were aware of the visible consequences of missing teeth, including difficulty chewing food and impact to the appearance of a smile, there was limited awareness of the more serious health consequences, which can include bone loss that may lead to changes in the shape of the face and repositioning of existing teeth.

According to Dr. Chris Marchack, DDS, a specialty dentist in California, the majority of patients are unaware of the health consequences that can arise from missing teeth. “We see patients every day that are hesitant to replace a missing tooth because they see it only as an aesthetic issue and are concerned about perceived vanity. It is vitally important for those in the dental profession to help patients not only understand the aesthetic benefits of an improved smile, but to also understand the health benefits of tooth replacement.”

While there was a very strong correlation between prevalence of missing teeth among lower income households and among those with less educational achievement, the presence of missing teeth was still shown to have a remarkably high prevalence even among adult Americans with higher incomes. In this survey, 33 percent of American adults in households with greater than \$75,000 annual income also had missing teeth.

Importance of Specific Attributes

Physical Attributes	Importance Top 2 Box	Satisfaction Top 2 Box	Gap in Satisfaction
Your smile	89%	75%	14
Appearance of your teeth	87%	74%	13
Your physique	59%	48%	11
Your hair	79%	76%	3
Your facial features	65%	68%	-3
The clothes that you wear	74%	80%	-6
Your eyes	67%	86%	-19

Awareness of Health Consequences

Awareness of Consequences of Missing Teeth	Total
<i>Sample Size. Have Missing Teeth</i>	26,422
Difficulty chewing food	59.0%
Shifting of surrounding teeth to fill gap	52.4%
Impact to appearance of smile	50.0%
Impact to overall facial contour (sunken face)	37.2%
Loss of the jaw bone	24.2%
Increased risk of heart disease*	10.7%
Diabetes*	4.3%
I have not heard of any of the above	20.2%

* When periodontal disease is related to tooth loss

About the Survey

The online survey was conducted by ICOM Information and Communications LP on behalf of Nobel Biocare and surveyed 54,680 American adults. The respondent sample was weighted in terms of age, income and geography to be consistent with U.S. Census data for adults over the age of 25. Results of the cross-tabulations were noted only if they were statistically significant (at 95 percent confidence interval). For more information visit www.usdentalsurvey.com.

About Nobel Biocare

Nobel Biocare is a medical devices group and the world leader in innovative esthetic dental solutions with its brands NobelActive™, Brånemark System®, NobelReplace™, NobelSpeedy™, NobelPerfect®, NobelDirect®, Replace Select (dental implants), Procera® (individualized dental prosthetics), NobelGuide™ (complete patient rehabilitation program) and NobelSmile™ (patient education and awareness program). Nobel Biocare is a full solution provider for restorative esthetic dentistry, offering a wide range of innovative Crown & Bridge & Implant products, as well as training and education, patient information and clinically documented treatment concepts. Nobel Biocare has over 2,500 employees and recorded revenue of EUR 665.9 million in 2007. The Company is domiciled and headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland. Production takes place at six production sites located in Sweden, the US, Japan and Israel. Nobel Biocare has 37 direct sales organizations. The shares of the parent company Nobel Biocare Holding AG are listed on the SWX Swiss Exchange.

Further information is available from

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