

Colgate Total

The continued success of Colgate Total can be attributed to its clinical effectiveness, which the average patient can experience first hand at each hygiene visit.



There are few true innovations when it comes to toothpaste. In fact, the last major advancement in the home care fight against gingivitis, plaque, tartar, and periodontitis occurred 15 years ago with the introduction of triclosan in Colgate Total toothpaste (Colgate-Palmolive Co, New York, NY). Colgate Total was first launched internationally in 1992, it became available to the US market in late 1997, and it is now sold in 105 countries worldwide. The long-term clinical efficacy of Colgate Total toothpaste has earned it a market leader position for many years.

FDA Approval

In 1997, Colgate Total was the first toothpaste to obtain a New Drug Approval by the Food and Drug Administration in more than 10 years. The approval was necessary because of the inclusion of the antibacterial agent triclosan, and the claim that the toothpaste helps to prevent bacterial plaque formation for up to 12 hours. By combining triclosan with a patented PVM/MA copolymer to provide therapeutic benefits and plaque protection between

brushings, Colgate Total provides dentists with an effective solution to help patients prevent gingivitis and cavities.

In the United States, approximately 80% of all adults and 90% of adults aged 55 to 64 are affected by some form of periodontitis.¹ Recent research also links periodontitis with an increased incidence of cardiovascular disease and pre-term birth.²

The need for oral home care products that better control plaque and thereby reduce the incidence of gingivitis and more serious cases of periodontitis is clear. Toothpaste that surface cleans teeth, fluoridates, and freshens breath is not enough for most patients to maintain good oral health. Products that treat and prevent plaque formation are greatly needed for home care, especially when soda drinking and smoking are still prevalent risk factors for periodontitis.

Clinical Effectiveness

With 15 years of clinical history, 44 controlled studies, 58 scientific posters, and 56 scientific articles, the clinical effectiveness of Colgate Total in

controlling plaque and improving gingival health is well documented. The addition of the antibacterial agent triclosan could bring up the issue of contributing to the resistance of bacteria or other deleterious effects on oral microflora; however, the research has effectively addressed those concerns³ and has also proven the reduction of both plaque and gingivitis through routine use.

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Included in the clinical trials for Colgate Total were studies of adolescents and adults for both general and at-risk populations. The antimicrobial effects of triclosan reduces plaque for up to 12 hours and therefore, can significantly reduce gingivitis when compared with fluoride dentifrices. Controlling gingivitis is the first step in home care to prevent periodontitis.

A study of susceptible adolescents age 11 to 13 years revealed that the use of a triclosan/copolymer dentifrice can delay and, in some cases prevent, the onset of periodontitis.⁴ Another study tracked a general population of adults for 5 years and suggests that the progression of periodontitis is slowed in susceptible individuals.⁵ The therapeutic

effect of Colgate Total for smokers was also studied by tracking the gingival health of smokers after nonsurgical periodontal therapy. This study showed that the use of the triclosan/copolymer dentifrice sustained the clinical benefits of periodontal therapy.⁶

Public Acceptance

The proven control of plaque formation and the resulting prevention and reduction of gingivitis through the use of Colgate Total toothpaste in routine home care is a major advancement for general oral health. The fight against periodontitis is a constant that requires sustained patient education. Patients may not be aware of how Colgate Total works or exactly why it can result in improved gingival health, but they have adopted and trust the technology as demonstrated by the consistent market share of approximately 30% that Colgate Total enjoys.

Dental professionals and associations have played a role in the adoption of this dentifrice. Colgate Total has earned seals of acceptance from independent dental associations in more than 30 countries, including the United States, Canada, and Great Britain.

Public Service

As Colgate Total has been widely used by the general public over the past 10 years, the manufacturer of the product, Colgate-Palmolive Co, seeks to further the adoption of the product by more at-risk populations. Recently, Colgate-Palmolive reports an increasing

rate of use among patients with diabetes who typically have more difficulty preventing and controlling periodontitis.

At best, Colgate Total toothpaste helps to prevent gingivitis from forming. When periodontal health is already compromised, the routine use of Colgate Total can slow the development of gingivitis into periodontitis. This provides clinicians with more time to diagnose and treat at-risk patients through good hygiene and improved home care before more extreme treatment measures may be required. —Monica Roy-Smith

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