Introduction

The American Association of Endodontists recognizes the important role that endodontists play as valuable members of the dental team. Root canal specialists who bring high-quality care, compassion and comfort to patients deserve recognition for their service and commitment. To this end, the AAE is launching the first national Root Canal Awareness Week for April 1-7, 2007.

A memorable Root Canal Awareness Week begins with a solid plan to inform the public about endodontics. The AAE invites you to join colleagues across the country in celebrating this event in your local community. Your activities will enhance visibility of the specialty and nearly 7,000 AAE members!

Overview

This guide includes suggestions for activities to promote Root Canal Awareness Week in your area, along with ready-to-use tools to implement them. You will find sections that include:

- Promotional Activities in Your Community
- Tips for Working With Local News Media
- Dental Professional Outreach Activities
- Suggested AAE Affiliate Activities
- Root Canal Awareness Week Poster
- Additional Resources

These resources will also be available year-round, free of charge, on the public awareness campaign Web site at www.rootcanalspecialists.org, where you can also find future dates for Root Canal Awareness Week and updates regarding AAE’s national activities surrounding the event.

Your Ideas Are Welcome!

The AAE is interested in your thoughts about Root Canal Awareness Week. If you have suggestions for improving these festivities next year, let us know! Or, if you’d like to share how you celebrated Root Canal Awareness Week in your community, send us your photos and stories, and we’ll share them with other AAE members. Feedback may be sent via e-mail to Dan Aske, public relations coordinator, at daske@aae.org.
Promotional Activities in Your Community

Enhance the visibility of your practice within your community by engaging patients, local sports teams, hospitals and other health care providers in Root Canal Awareness Week activities. Vendors or local businesses may become valuable partners in spreading your message, and may even sponsor some of your events.

Root Canal Awareness Week Poster

Print out the 8½" x 11" poster announcing Root Canal Awareness Week and post it in your practice reception area and patient exam rooms. The poster can also be displayed at your local hospitals, schools, community message boards and other appropriate venues. You may even wish to send a copy of the poster with a personalized letter to your referring dentist.

Community Presentations

Community groups and medical facilities offer a direct link to patients who need to know more about how root canal treatment is virtually painless. Potential audiences include:

- Students at local high schools, colleges and universities;
- Members of civic clubs and social groups;
- Attendees of hospital health fairs; and
- Staff at local businesses with large numbers of employees.

Contact these groups directly and offer to present a short, informational lecture about root canal treatment during Root Canal Awareness Week. Local newspapers and hospitals frequently publish monthly activities that may also provide speaking opportunities. Demonstrate the five steps to saving an avulsed tooth or describe common types of tooth pain that may require treatment by an endodontist.

The AAE provides the following materials that may assist you in educating the public:

- Patient education brochures on several topics including dental symptoms, endodontic treatment, retreatment and cracked teeth
- Two different speakers kits covering endodontic treatment, cracked and avulsed teeth; or endodontic treatment and surgery.
- Avulsed tooth poster
- Community Outreach Tool Kit
Encourage Mouthguard Use by Student Athletes

Teach local schoolchildren, school nurses, coaches and athletes about the five easy steps to saving avulsed teeth, and promote good oral health by encouraging mouthguard use. The AAE has developed the following easy-to-understand educational materials, which may be distributed to school personnel with a personalized letter from your practice:

- Avulsed tooth poster
- Tooth trauma chart
- AAE position statement on mouthguards

Sponsoring a local athletic team, or setting up a table at local sporting events to distribute tooth-saving kits and information about saving avulsed teeth may be other good opportunities to encourage injury prevention.

Open Houses

Host an open house and tour of your endodontic practice. Invite hospital and school staff, area business leaders, the public and news media. Discuss the technological advances that make root canals virtually painless, and showcase equipment you utilize in your practice to provide the highest quality care. Offer assistance in diagnosing traumatic injuries or complex orofacial pain, and distribute practice contact information and other educational resources.

Public Awareness Campaign Logo

Incorporate the Endodontists: the root canal specialists logo into all of your Root Canal Awareness Week promotional materials, and your office stationery.

Endodontists

the root canal specialists

Electronic versions of the logo are available in the Members section of the campaign Web site and on your Community Outreach Tool Kit CD-ROM.

Or, use the Root Canal Awareness Week logo, which is also available on the campaign Web site.
**Tips for Working With Local News Media**

Use your local media to increase awareness and involve the community in your Root Canal Awareness Week celebrations.

**Public Service Announcement**

Public service announcements (PSA) are written or recorded messages designed to cause listeners to change their behavior, their attitude or to take action. Radio stations reserve time for issues of public interest and run PSAs free of charge.

To increase the likelihood of your PSA airing, focus on the public good of Root Canal Awareness Week. Use the sample included on page 6 as the basis for your PSA and be sure to include your practice information. Submit your PSA to the public service announcement director of your local radio station.

For more details on how to develop a PSA, consult the AAE’s *Community Outreach Tool Kit.*

**Press Releases**

Use our sample press release to notify local media outlets of your Root Canal Awareness Week event. Highlight activities and successes in your practice in the past year; provide background information about your planned activity as well as statistics on root canal treatment. Include quotes from endodontists in your practice who have been active in dental health promotion in the community regarding their experiences. If one of your patients is willing to speak publicly about his or her root canal experience, feature a quote in your release.

The sample news release provided on page 7 contains a brief paragraph about the AAE at the end. You may use this paragraph, or develop your own text about your practice. For further ideas and guidance in writing and distributing press releases, please consult the AAE’s *Community Outreach Tool Kit.*

**Letters to the Editor**

Most newspapers accept letters to the editor. This provides you with an excellent opportunity to present your perspective on important issues related to endodontics. Suggestions for content include recent developments related to bisphosphonate-associated osteonecrosis of the jaw, advances in stem cell research including pulp tissue regeneration and traumatic injury prevention for athletes.

A sample letter to the editor is included on page 8. For a complete set of guidelines on writing a letter to the editor, please consult the AAE’s *Community Outreach Tool Kit.*
Calendar Listing

An effective tool to promote a weeklong event like Root Canal Awareness Week is through a calendar listing in your local newspaper. Calendar listings are designed to promote events in a “community calendar” without the full coverage of a press release.

Use the sample on page 9 to promote activities in which your practice will take part during Root Canal Awareness Week. Call your local newspaper prior to sending your listing to ensure you have the correct contact name and information.

For additional samples and more information on how to write a calendar listing, consult the AAE’s Community Outreach Tool Kit.

Sample Public Service Announcement

Are you worried about keeping your natural teeth for a lifetime? Save your teeth with a root canal! The American Association of Endodontists is announcing that April 1-7 is Root Canal Awareness Week—an opportunity for everyone to learn how modern root canal treatment can comfortably preserve your natural smile with virtually no pain. For more information, visit www.rootcanalspecialists.org.
**For Immediate Release**

**Contact:** [person in your practice who answers questions from the media]
[Contact's phone number]

**[Your practice name] Hosts Special Event in Observance of Root Canal Awareness Week**

[City, State] [Date you distribute this release, including year] – The [name of your practice] is celebrating Root Canal Awareness Week by [finish sentence with a brief description of your event]. This year, the American Association of Endodontists is celebrating Root Canal Awareness Week April 1-7 to recognize the commitment and dedication of endodontists in the United States and around the world to saving natural teeth and relieving tooth pain.

[This second paragraph should include information about your event: the what, when, where, why and how your community can participate.]

This is the first Root Canal Awareness Week celebration ever organized by the AAE. Its purpose is to honor the contributions of endodontists to dental care, and educate the public regarding the role of root canal specialists on the dental team.

For more information about Root Canal Awareness Week, please visit [your Web site address] or the American Association of Endodontists public awareness campaign Web site at [www.rootcanalspecialists.org].

**American Association of Endodontists**

The American Association of Endodontists, headquartered in Chicago, represents more than 6,600 members worldwide, including approximately 95 percent of all eligible endodontists in the United States. The AAE, founded in 1943, is dedicated to excellence in the art and science of endodontics and to the highest standard of patient care. The Association inspires its members to pursue professional advancement and personal fulfillment through education, research, advocacy, leadership, communication and service. For more information, visit the AAE Web site at [www.aae.org].

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[Date]

Dear Editor:

Root canal treatment. The mere mention of this procedure in a dentist’s office is apt to make patients recoil in fear. However, the truth behind root canals is far from scary.

This April 1-7, the [name of your practice] will be participating in the first-ever Root Canal Awareness Week, sponsored by the American Association of Endodontists. We are taking this week to dispel myths and misconceptions about root canals, many of which prevent people from receiving necessary dental care.

For example, did you know that having a root canal is no more uncomfortable than having a cavity filled? With modern advances in endodontic technology, as well as proper anesthesia, patients often marvel at how easy a root canal can be.

I encourage everyone to learn more about root canal treatment, and help to spread the word that it is nothing to fear! Please visit www.rootcanalspecialists.org for more information.

Sincerely,

[Name
Address
City, State Zip
Contact Phone Number]
Sample Calendar Listing

[Date]

Contact: [person in your practice who answers questions from the media]  
[Contact's phone number]

Celebrate the Launch of Root Canal Awareness Week!

Have you always dreaded the thought of getting a root canal? Learn how quick and comfortable the procedure really is during the first-ever Root Canal Awareness Week. [Name of your practice] will be celebrating April 1-7, 2007 with a series of special events, including [insert description of your planned activities] and much more.

Sponsored by the American Association of Endodontists, Root Canal Awareness Week seeks to dispel myths and misconceptions regarding this oft-maligned but virtually painless dental procedure. Make sure you take the time to learn how you can save your natural teeth for a lifetime!

[Event Details]

Root Canal Awareness Week  
April 1-7, 2007

For more information, visit: [your practice Web site address] or [www.rootcanalspecialists.org].
Dental Professional Outreach Activities

Referring dentists are often the lifeblood of an endodontic practice. Root Canal Awareness Week offers the opportunity to show your gratitude for their continued support and enlighten them to the latest advances in the specialty. Below are some ideas to spur your outreach to referring dentists and other dental professionals.

Open Houses

Host an open house for your referring dentists and other local dentists to showcase what your practice has to offer patients. From the latest endodontic instruments and techniques, to your professional staff and resources, your expertise in endodontics can show general practitioners why it would be best to refer endodontic cases.

Gift Baskets

Show your appreciation for referrals by sending a gift basket loaded with treats or AAE educational materials. General dentists understand that well-informed patients are less anxious about pending endodontic treatment—the AAE patient education brochures explain how root canal treatment relieves pain, and can be personalized with your practice information. In addition, back issues of the ENDODONTICS: Colleagues for Excellence newsletter, as well as the collection of the AAE’s free position statements and fact sheets can provide valuable reference material on various endodontic topics for your referring dentist.

Dinner Education Presentations

The AAE’s ENDODONTICS: Colleagues for Excellence newsletter series provides companion PowerPoint® presentations suitable for the dental professional audience. Consider hosting an after-hours seminar at your office for interested general dentists with a light dinner and refreshments.

Endodontic Treatment Gift Certificates

A great way to show your gratitude to referring dentists, while also providing a valuable endodontic service for patients in need, is by providing complimentary treatment. Use the sample letter included on page 11 as a gift certificate entitling the recipient of your referring dentist’s choice to a complimentary root canal.
Dear [Referring Dentist],

It is with the deepest gratitude that I thank you for all the great patients you’ve sent me over the years.

Giving your patients exceptional care is bringing my staff and me great joy every day. We prize the trust you place in us and continually strive to improve and enhance the professional relationship we share. Keeping the entirety of this in mind, I have a rather unique offer for you.

All of us have patients that strike a fond note in our hearts. We want to deliver our finest dentistry to them, but for whatever reason they cannot financially commit to our treatment plans. Here is a coupon for you to give to some deserving person that will allow them to have one root canal, on me, to help them in completing their treatment. Hopefully, this will let them know that you care so very much for them that you will facilitate this favor for them.

Please have your office staff schedule this appointment for your special patient so that we may be discreet in discussing financial arrangements with them.

Thank you again for the confidence you show in me by allowing me to care for your patients. I want you to know the high value I place on our partnership in dentistry.

Very truly yours,

[Name and credentials
Contact information]
Suggested AAE Affiliate Activities

AAE affiliate organizations have intimate knowledge of the challenges and opportunities facing their constituents on a state level. Below are some activities affiliates can undertake to increase endodontic awareness.

Official Proclamation

Make Root Canal Awareness Week officially recognized in your state or city with a proclamation from your mayor or governor. A proclamation adds credibility and creates public awareness of the specialty’s contributions to public health. The sample proclamation provided on page 13 can be customized with your affiliate information, but make sure to contact local officials to determine the best way to submit it for consideration.

Donated Services

Nationwide, underserved populations go without necessary dental care due to mitigating circumstances. Root Canal Awareness Week provides an appropriate touchstone event to organize a statewide effort for endodontists to donate their services to those in need. A unique event could be coordinated at the affiliate level or affiliates could recommend participation in an existing program, such as Give Kids a Smile or Donated Dental Services.

Affiliate Member Communication

While the AAE works on a national level to promote Root Canal Awareness Week, affiliate leaders can ensure your constituents are aware of their responsibility to assist the AAE on a local level. Customize the sample e-mail on page 14 and send it to local endodontists with a motivational message encouraging activity in your state.
[Date]

[Honorable Mayor/Governor  
Office of the Mayor/Governor  
Address  
City, State Zip]  

Dear Mayor/Governor [insert name]:

I am proud to inform you that the [insert state/military affiliation] affiliate of the American Association of Endodontists will celebrate the first-ever “Root Canal Awareness Week” this April 1-7, 2007. In an effort to dispel myths and misconceptions about this important dental procedure, root canal specialists in your state will be taking special care to educate local communities about its virtually pain-free nature and impact on overall health.

Many people don’t know that root canal treatment is no more uncomfortable than getting a filling placed. It’s a beneficial treatment that eliminates pain and helps people keep their natural teeth. More than 17 million teeth are saved through root canal treatment every year, preserving the smiles and dental health of many of your citizens.

On behalf of our national organization, which represents more than 5,000 endodontists across the country, I hope you will provide us with a proclamation stating that the city of/state of [insert city/state] recognizes April 1-7 as Root Canal Awareness Week.

We would be honored for you to consider this request and for your support of the endodontic specialty. We hope to receive this proclamation by [insert date]. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. The proclamation can be sent to me at:

[Name  
Address  
City, State Zip]  

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

[Name and credentials]  
[Affiliate information]
Dear Members of [affiliate name]:

For the first time, the American Association of Endodontists is launching “Root Canal Awareness Week” this April 1-7, 2007. Part of the public awareness campaign, *Endodontists: the root canal specialists*, this week aims to dispel the myths and misconceptions surrounding our specialty and enlighten the public to how root canal treatment can save their natural teeth for a lifetime.

At the request of the AAE, we are asking that you take part in this year’s activities to enhance the outreach the national organization will be conducting on our behalf. The AAE has developed a member outreach planning guide that can give you a good foundation for ideas to conduct in your communities.

Please take the time to review the guide and consider accomplishing even the smallest of activities. We are the frontline of educating our patients, referring dentists and other colleagues about the important role endodontists play on the dental team.

If you garner results from your outreach, we also encourage you to share them with your colleagues by mentioning them at your next study club meeting or by posting them to the AAE’s Discussion Board. While there, you can learn what endodontists across the country are doing to further the growth of the specialty.

We look forward to your continued support and participation in this exciting event!

Regards,

[Name
Title
Contact Information]
Saving your natural teeth can be quick and virtually painless.

For more information about root canal treatment, visit the American Association of Endodontists Web site at www.aae.org.
Additional Resources

For additional resources that may support your Root Canal Awareness Week efforts, including endodontic fact sheets, public awareness campaign core messages, logos and advertisements, please consult the AAE’s *Community Outreach Tool Kit* and CD-ROM, or call the AAE at 800/872-3636 (North America) or 312/266-7255 (International).

**Future Root Canal Awareness Week Dates:**

- March 30 – April 5, 2008
- March 29 – April 4, 2009
- March 28 – April 3, 2010