

Toothpaste Truths: What Every Dental Professional Needs to Know



Cheryl Calmis, RDH, BS, MEd

This CE course provides dental professionals with a comprehensive understanding of toothpaste, including its ingredients, indications, mechanisms of action, and current evidence-based recommendations.

This continuing education course explores the science, composition, and clinical implications of toothpaste formulations. Dental professionals will gain a deeper understanding of active and inactive ingredients, including fluoride and its alternatives, abrasives, humectants, surfactants, and desensitizing agents. The course will also address the latest evidence on whitening, sensitivity, natural and DIY products, and how to guide patient recommendations based on individual oral health needs.

Learning Objectives:

After this course, attendees will be able to:

1. Describe the key components and functions of common toothpaste ingredients, including abrasives, humectants, detergents, and therapeutic agents.
2. Explain the role of fluoride and alternative active ingredients (e.g., nanohydroxyapatite and xylitol) in caries prevention and enamel remineralization.
3. Identify different toothpaste formulations tailored for specific oral health needs, such as sensitivity, whitening, gingivitis, erosion, and dry mouth.
4. Interpret toothpaste labeling and ingredient lists to make evidence-based product recommendations for diverse patient populations.
5. Analyze the safety and effectiveness of trending or alternative toothpaste products, including natural and DIY formulations, using current scientific literature.
6. Apply patient-centered communication strategies when educating patients about toothpaste selection and use based on individual oral health status.

Cheryl Calmis, RDH, BS, MEd, is a seasoned dental hygienist with over 30 years of clinical experience specializing in periodontics, laser therapy, and Guided Biofilm Therapy. She holds a bachelor's degree in both biology and dental hygiene, and earned her Master's in Education with honors, focusing on Instructional Design — a perfect blend of science and teaching.

Cheryl is passionate about translating clinical expertise into impactful education. She has delivered continuing education courses for RDH Under One Roof Extended, Cloud Dentistry and numerous dental and hygiene organizations nationwide. Her writing has been featured in respected platforms including Today's RDH, Cocofloss, and DoctorBase, and she has shared her insights as a guest on the Phil Klein Dental Podcast and the Dental Bun podcast.

Now in her ninth year as a Professional Educator for Waterpik™, Cheryl brings her signature mix of research-based knowledge and real-world relatability to every course she teaches. She is an active member of the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA), California Dental Hygienists' Association (CDHA) Professional Development Committee, and the American Academy of Periodontology (AAP) Dental Hygienist Recognition Program.