

## • non-maleficence

The dental profession holds a special position of trust within society. As a consequence, society affords the profession certain privileges that are not available to members of the public. In return, the profession makes a commitment to society that its members will adhere to high ethical standards of conduct. These standards are embodied in the ADA Principles of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct (ADA Code). Members of the ADA voluntarily agree to abide by the ADA Code as a condition of membership in the Association. They recognize that continued public trust in the dental profession is based on the commitment of individual dentists to high ethical standards of conduct.

### **The ADA Code has three main components:**

- The Principles of Ethics
- The Code of Professional Conduct
- The Advisory Opinions

### **Five ethical principles in the code:**

1. Veracity - truthfulness
2. Justice - fairness
3. Autonomy - self-governance
4. Beneficence - do good
5. Nonmaleficence - do no harm

**Note:** The American Dental Hygienists' Association also has its own Principles of Ethics.

**\*\*\* Remember:** The dentist and dental hygienist are responsible for providing information and dental care. **However,** ultimately the patient is responsible for maintaining his / her own oral health (brushing, flossing, etc.).

**Note:** The **Good Samaritan Law**, enacted in all states, provides immunity from suit for specified health practitioners who render emergency aid to victims of accidents, provided there is **no evidence** of gross negligence.

**Important: Not all states** include dentists in the Good Samaritan Law.