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WELLNESS + NUTRITION



Nutrition for healthy bones and teeth

Bones and teeth are not the same, but it's a common misconception that they are. Find out how they're different and everyday foods you can eat to keep them both healthy.

Access the digital version anytime, anywhere at grinmag.com.



On topic with Dr. Dill: a guide to loose baby teeth



Meet Joseph Dill, DDS, Delta Dental's Chief Dental Officer. With more than 30 years of experience in the dental field, including eight in private and public health practice and 20 in dental insurance, Dr. Dill provides expert insights and helpful advice to keep you smiling bright.

And just like that, your little one is starting to wiggle their first loose tooth. But what happens next? Should you simply let nature take its course and wait until the tooth falls out on its own? Should you help the tooth along with a quick squeeze? What should you do if your child has ongoing pain? We'll guide you through it.

Around ages 5 to 7, it's completely normal for your child's baby teeth to begin to loosen and wiggle. These wiggly teeth should usually have no problem falling out on their own with minimal help. But if you do have a stubborn loose baby tooth, you can help it make its way out — gently!

Try not to pull a baby tooth too early. If you have to work hard to wiggle the tooth, it's not quite ready. If the permanent tooth underneath isn't ready, a neighboring permanent tooth that has already grown in could shift into the empty space, potentially causing it to become crooked.



Which teeth will fall out first?

Typically, teeth fall out in the same order they appear. The first teeth to fall out are often the two front bottom and two front top teeth. The natural order will then be the two teeth next to the top teeth and bottom teeth, and so on.

Every child is different, so they may not all follow the exact same order. By the age of 12, all baby teeth have usually fallen out.



When should you help a loose tooth out?

While it's natural to want to pull, twist and wiggle a loose baby tooth, it's recommended to let it fall out naturally. But if the tooth becomes bothersome during everyday tasks like eating, drinking and talking, go ahead and gently squeeze or quickly twist with a tissue to free it.



What if there is pain or bleeding?

You can moisten a piece of gauze and have your child lightly bite down on it to reduce the bleeding. If consistent bleeding persists after two hours, it's time to call the dentist.

For the first full day after a tooth falls out, stick to soft foods and avoid any hot foods until the area has had some time to heal. Try not to directly brush the area with a toothbrush for around two days and gently rinse with some salt water.



Make losing baby teeth fun for kids with the tradition of the Tooth Fairy! This can help ease any fears they have about losing their baby teeth and create a lasting memory from their childhood. For inspiration, fun tooth fairy activities and extra resources, check out originaltoothfairypoll.com. ■

Mouth-friendly recipe: spiced cran-apple tea mocktail

Impress your guests with your mixology skills while looking out for their holiday health. This festive mocktail makes good use of seasonal favorites like warm spices, cranberries and apples. The sweet-tart combo of the fruits and a touch of star anise simmer nicely together for a drink that's worth toasting to — and a home that smells like a cozy winter wonderland!

Ingredients:

10 cups of water
6 large apples, sliced
½ cup fresh cranberries
4 cinnamon sticks
1-2 whole star anise
1 teaspoon ground ginger
4 cinnamon herbal tea bags

Directions:

- 1 Pour water into a large pot. Add apples, cranberries, cinnamon sticks, anise and ginger.
- 2 Bring water to boil over medium heat.
- 3 Add tea bags and steep for amount of time instructed on package.
- 4 Spoon tea bags out of pot.
- 5 Reduce heat to medium low and simmer for 2 hours or until apples are soft.
- 6 Mash apples and cranberries and continue to simmer for an additional hour.
- 7 Strain mixture into a large bowl; return liquid to pot.
- 8 Garnish with fresh mint, cranberries, cinnamon sticks or whole star anise if desired. ■

Cranberries
contain polyphenols that help keep bacteria from sticking to teeth.

Ginger
has gingerols that help prevent gum infections and disease.

Herbal tea
can reduce acid in your mouth, which helps fight cavities.

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ways to craft healthy mocktails

Prepping for the holidays may have you planning some delicious mocktails that are overflowing with flavor and flare. Here are some tips for making spirit-free drinks that are sip-worthy for any occasion but don't compromise the health of your smile.



Try using coconut water

Fruit juice and sparkling water — especially lemon and lime — are common ingredients in mocktails. But it's full of acid and sugar, which are two of the top culprits of cavities and tooth decay. Try swapping sugary fruit juice for coconut water. It has many health benefits and still adds a flavorful splash to your mocktail.

Benefits of coconut water:

- It has potassium, which helps your teeth and bones use calcium more efficiently
- All the essential vitamins and minerals can help balance and lower blood sugar levels
- It's full of electrolytes to help make the most of your hydration



Mix in some mint

Mint can be used in a mocktail, like a spirit-free mojito, or as a garnish on a non-alcoholic cranberry mint fizz. It's also a crowd favorite in the oral health world, as it can both mask bad breath and can help ward off cavity-causing bacteria.

More perks of mint:

- Can help relieve indigestion and acid reflux, which can damage your teeth over time
- Contains nutrients like fiber, vitamin A and iron for a strong, healthy smile
- Easy to grow indoors



Grab some green tea

Green tea is arguably one of the healthiest beverages out there, so why not incorporate it into a mocktail? Marry it with mint to create a green tea mojito that doubles down on fighting bad breath and bacteria or pair it with ginger and a little honey for a fun spin on a Moscow mule.

Additional green tea superpowers:

- Can help reduce bad breath and fight bacteria in the mouth
- It's full of antioxidants which have been linked to lowering the risk of cancer

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Readers ask, we answer

Clayton asks:
“What happens if my wisdom teeth don't grow in?”



Have a question you'd like us to answer? Send it to grin@deltadental.com, and it could be featured in an upcoming issue.

Great question! Most adults' wisdom teeth will begin to appear between ages 17 to 21.



FUN FACT:

They're called wisdom teeth because they come in at a more mature age.

While getting wisdom teeth removed is a common rite of passage for those in their late teens and early twenties, some people never need them removed.

Most people have four wisdom teeth — two on top and two on the bottom — but it is completely normal to not develop one or all wisdom teeth, and it isn't something to cause great concern.

Why you might not have wisdom teeth

It's more common than you think for some people to never have wisdom teeth — between 5% and 37% of people worldwide never develop wisdom teeth.¹ Genetics can be a big factor. So, if one or both of your parents never had wisdom teeth appear, you might not either.

If you don't see them in your mouth, an X-ray from your dentist can reveal if you have wisdom teeth or not. If you do, you'll see them on the X-ray, still under your gums and not yet erupted. Your dentist will refer to your wisdom teeth as “impacted” if there is not enough room for your tooth or teeth to erupt normally. Your wisdom teeth are considered “erupted” if they have broken through your gums. Dentists will often refer to impaction or eruption by degree, such as “partially” or “fully” impacted or erupted.

¹Dental Research Journal

Sometimes wisdom teeth can remain impacted without any pain or health issues at all. If they aren't causing issues, your dentist will likely continue to monitor their health and may recommend removal at some point in the future.

Impacted wisdom teeth, explained

Impacted wisdom teeth don't always cause symptoms right away, or at all. If symptoms are experienced, they may start when those teeth begin to damage other teeth or become infected.

Symptoms of infected wisdom teeth can include:

- Bad breath
- Red, swollen or bleeding gums
- Jaw pain

If left untreated, impacted wisdom teeth can cause more serious oral health conditions such as:

- Cysts
- Tooth decay
- Damage to other teeth
- Gum disease
- Pain from shifting teeth

Overall, it is completely normal to not have wisdom teeth emerge. Get regular dental checkups so your dentist can monitor your oral health, including wisdom teeth. If you experience any discomfort or other changes between checkups, call your dentist. ■



Creating a space for you to de-stress

The holiday season is full of joy and connection with loved ones, but sometimes all the hustle and bustle can cause a little anxiety. Left unchecked, this anxiety can influence your smile: grinding teeth, canker sores and cold sores are all potential issues stemming from too much stress.

That's why it is important to relax and refresh, even if winter offers fewer opportunities to release your built-up energy outside. Here are simple ways to create a peaceful indoor retreat and optimize your de-stress time.

Refresh an existing space



Start by decluttering your space — any space!

Less clutter immediately helps you relax and feel less stress. Start small, like your bathroom cabinets. Check your oral health care supplies and toss old or expired items, and refresh with new ones.



Move a comfy chair near a window for good lighting and add a soft throw or pillow.

Snuggle in to read or meditate, or simply be mindful of the view outside. If you notice your jaw is clenched, move the tip of your tongue between your teeth to relax it.



Introduce some greenery to an area you spend the most time in.

Plants can reduce stress and instantly make you feel calmer. Add some nature sounds from a sound machine to really bring the outdoors in.

Design a calming retreat



Light aromatherapy candles around your tub and soak in a salt bath.

Magnesium salt helps the body relax and may help reduce anxiety and stress. Soothing lights or candles, scents and a tailored music playlist can set the perfect mood to help your worries float away.



Roll out a yoga mat and practice the basics.

Child's pose is easy to do and is known to calm the mind. To practice this pose, kneel with your toes together, knees hip-width apart, and lower your torso with your forehead on your mat. Pull your tongue away from the roof of your mouth to release tension in your jaw.



Place an essential oil diffuser on your nightstand and practice deep breathing.

Add your favorite throw if you'd like an added layer of comfort. A power nap of just 10-20 minutes is enough time to feel rejuvenated. If you tend to grind your teeth while your sleep, talk to your dentist about a night guard for protection.



Brew a cup of tea and enjoy with a loved one.

Whatever tea you try, keep your smile in mind by limiting ingredients like lemon and honey that can add sugar and acid to your drink.

Give a room a dual purpose



Use a corner or portion of the room as a zen zone.

What relaxes you? Personalize a place in your home that will help you feel peaceful. That could mean anything from surrounding yourself with your favorite books, enjoying your favorite scents using candles or essential oils, or simply kicking back in your favorite chair.



Gather common art supplies in a tote or laundry basket.

The kitchen table works well as a studio. Make it a family event and create cards for nursing home residents. Making others smile benefits you, too!



Carve out a little nook in your living room.

Get cozy! Wear loose, soft clothes, find a favorite blanket or pillow, and use this common space to refresh your spirits. Turn on a favorite show, smile with friends or family, toss a blanket on the floor and cuddle with your pet — the time you enjoy will benefit your oral health and overall well-being.



Create a screen-free oasis and help your body unwind.

It's okay to relax with phone in hand, but it's also great to unplug every once in a while. Create a screen-free space where you can unwind without the pressure of text messages, app alerts and social media updates. Glowing screens can also disrupt your body's sleep cycle, so reducing screen time may help you sleep soundly — and avoid oral health issues caused by poor rest. ■

Holiday stress test: How are you managing?



How prepared are you for the holiday season?

- (A) The fridge is stocked, guest beds are made and all gifts are bought! (3 points)
- (B) Not 100% sure where my decorations are, but my grocery list is done. (2 points)
- (C) Oh, right, it's the holiday season ... help! (1 point)

Stock your fridge with smile-friendly snack options during the holidays, like string cheese and crunchy veggies like celery and carrots.

Are you making your well-being a priority even with a mile-long to-do list?

- (A) I set aside a little "me time" every morning with a cup of tea or coffee. (3 points)
- (B) I prioritize taking time to decompress a couple of times a week. (2 points)
- (C) Time for myself? There's no time for anything! (1 point)

Daily self-care is important, even during the holidays and it should include brushing twice a day and flossing daily.

How have you been sleeping?

- (A) I sleep so soundly, like a baby, if you will. (3 points)
- (B) Pretty average — sometimes I stay up too late. (2 points)
- (C) I toss and turn most nights of the week and am exhausted in the morning. (1 point)

Teeth grinding is often caused by stress. A night guard can protect your teeth while sleeping to avoid symptoms like jaw pain, headaches and cracked teeth.

Throughout the holidays, how do you caffeinate?

- (A) A matcha latte or a caffeinated cup of green tea is all I need. (3 points)
- (B) Two cups of coffee have turned into three, but then I'm good to go for the day! (2 points)
- (C) I've started sipping on a coffee or a caffeinated drink all day to make it through. (1 point)

Coffee is a common choice for a boost of caffeine, but be sure to skip the sugar, which can lead to cavities or tooth decay. Try adding your favorite milk and a dash of cinnamon.

What do you do when you start to feel the pressure of the holidays?

- (A) I take a deep breath and turn on my favorite TV show to reset. (3 points)
- (B) Sometimes stress gets the best of me, but I try to relax with a mid-day break. (2 points)
- (C) I indulge in all the holiday sweet treats. (1 point)

The holidays can be a busy (and fun!) time of year. Remember to set aside time to prioritize yourself.

Add up your score and see how you're managing stress this holiday season.

- 12-15 points You are keeping everything as low-stress as you can while prioritizing your oral and overall health — keep it up!
- 10-11 points You're letting a lot of holiday stress roll right off your back. But don't forget to take some time for yourself to avoid holiday burnout.
- 5-9 points Stress has officially moved in rent-free in your household! Time to take a step back, relax your shoulders and jaw, and take a deep breath.

Stress can come from every angle, but don't forget to put yourself first and focus on your overall, oral and mental health. ■



SAVE, SMILE, REPEAT: oral health on a budget

A healthy smile doesn't need to break the bank. Spend less, save more and maintain your oral health routine with these cost-saving suggestions.



Buy the basics at a dollar store.

There's a whole section dedicated to oral health, so pick up some fluoride toothpaste, floss, extra toothbrushes (always choose soft bristle brushes), lip balm or mouthwash. Be sure to replace your toothbrush or toothbrush head every three to four months.



Stock up on toothpaste, toothbrushes and floss at a big box store.

Be sure to check the price per unit to confirm you're getting a good deal and double-check the expiration date to see if you'll use it up in time. Buying in bulk will keep your oral health necessities on hand throughout the year. No more last-minute runs to the store!



Check out sales for your oral health products.

Bargain hunting can lead to big savings over time. Dig through your junk mail and newspaper ads for print coupons, or go online and check the store's website or app for digital discounts.



Skip the teeth whitening toothpastes and kits.

Stick with basic cavity-fighting toothpaste instead of the fancier options, which might promise to whiten teeth but don't actually have added benefits. Fluoride is the most important ingredient and it is found in most budget-friendly toothpastes!

Continued from page 13



Consider switching to a store's private brand.

Most stores source their products from the same suppliers as national brands, so you're getting the same product under a different name — just make sure it has fluoride!



Get the most out of your toothpaste tube.

Use only the recommended pea-size amount and then squeeze the last little bit out. You'd be surprised how many more brushings you can get when you squeeze the tube from the bottom and flatten on the way up!



Shop around online to find the best deals.

When it's time to replenish your oral health supplies, take some time to browse online. Often, you can stack coupons from manufacturers on top of store discounts to bring the cost down even further.



Snag some samples at your next dental visit.

Most dentists provide a small goodie bag of oral health supplies, which may include a different type of toothpaste, toothbrush or floss that you haven't tried before.

Although there are many ways to cut costs, it's always best to prioritize your oral health. Be sure not to skip out on visiting your dentist for regular checkups, which are covered at 100% on most dental plans. Seeing the dentist regularly can save you money in the long run by detecting any dental problems early before they get costly to treat. ■

Your winter smile list



1
Visit a local market for seasonal gifts.

- ② Finish an indoor house project that's been on your to-do list.
- ③ Settle into a comfy chair with the latest best-seller. Check out other tips to de-stress on page 8.
- ④ Camp out inside — with layers of cozy blankets.
- ⑤ Call friends over for a game night and introduce them to a trendy new one.
- ⑥ Take a virtual art class and unleash your creativity.
- ⑦ Set a new year's goal that benefits your oral and overall health.
- ⑧ Walk around your neighborhood and enjoy the holiday lights.
- ⑨ Mix up a delightful mocktail. See our recipe on page 5.
- ⑩ Grab a sled and find the nearest hill — don't forget your mouth guard! ■



Dental trend spotlight: Tiny teeth-cleaning nanobots

We've all probably heard of ways to make our homes "smarter" — an interactive thermostat, voice-activated light bulbs and more. But what about a smart mouth?

Introducing nanobots to the world of oral health

Scientists at the University of Pennsylvania have created tiny cleaning robots they think could help clean even the hardest-to-reach areas of the mouth and your teeth. The nano-sized robots can be driven with magnetic force, ideally into the tiny areas in and between your teeth to both scrub away plaque and kill bacteria with heat and antimicrobials.

The nanobots can adapt to any tooth surface or position and can clean out the bacteria better than you could with a traditional toothbrush and toothpaste. Other researchers from the Indian Institute of Science are using nanobots to generate heat and kill bacteria inside an infected tooth. This could potentially offer a way to improve the standard root canal treatment.

Putting technology to the test

During testing, scientists took tooth samples and injected them with the robots and were able to successfully guide them through tiny, microscopic channels (dentin tubules) that run through the root of the tooth. In the tubules, the nanobots killed the bacteria and then were removed from the tooth.

By tapping into nanobot technology, these robots could be an alternative to the current way root canals are performed because they may be able to clean out all bacteria and infected material more thoroughly.

Our verdict: While this revolutionary technology is exciting for the world of dentistry, it is still very much in the beginning phases, and is being thoroughly studied before it has the possibility of being introduced to consumers. We're eager to see how it develops. ■



Prepping for your child's first dental visit

Starting children on the road to a lifetime of good oral health includes taking them to their first dentist appointment by the age of 1 or 6 months after their first tooth appears.

Importance of the first dental appointment

Right now, most American children don't visit the dentist until they are 3 or 4 years old — that's 2 to 3 years too late! Cavities can begin developing as soon as that first tooth appears, which for some children can be as early as 6 months old. Can you imagine having a cavity before you can walk or talk?

What to expect at the first visit

The dentist will start by examining your little one's teeth, jaws and oral tissues to assess their overall growth and development. They will be looking for any cavities, gum issues or mouth injuries. Once the exam is complete, the dentist may clean your child's teeth with a soft toothbrush and recommend a fluoride treatment. This will ultimately depend on your child's age and risk for tooth decay.

A helpful aspect of the first visit will be when they explain and demonstrate different brushing and flossing techniques to help care for your baby's teeth. Your dentist can also provide recommendations on the use of fluoride as well as feeding and snacking practices to keep your child's smile healthy. This is also a great time for caregivers to ask questions and get useful tips on teething, diet and other oral hygiene instructions, as well as information on preventing cavities, accidents and tooth trauma.

At your first visit, be sure to share relevant information about your child with your dentist. This may include medical conditions, medications and any other oral problems they've experienced.



Many dental plans cover routine checkups and cleanings at 100%, so it can be beneficial to get your child on your plan right away. Delta Dental also makes it easy to find a dentist using our dentist finder at deltadental.com, which allows you to search by your location, plan type and dentist specialty. ■

Tips for taking care of baby teeth

- Try not to wash their pacifier or binky with your own mouth — use clean water instead.
- Start brushing as soon as the first tooth appears in the mouth.
- Use a tiny rice-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste from the time the first tooth comes in until age 3.
- From the ages of 3 to 6, use a small pea-sized amount.
- Once they have two or more teeth that touch, it's time to start flossing.
- Try a teething ring, cool spoon, pacifier or cold washcloth to ease the pain in their gums.
- Get your child to stop using a pacifier or sucking their thumb before age 3 to keep baby teeth in the proper position.

autoimmune diseases

CONNECTED TO ORAL HEALTH

Autoimmune diseases are conditions where the body's immune system attacks its own healthy cells. While these diseases can have an effect on overall health, they can also have a connection to oral health.



Be sure to share your condition and any medications you're taking with your dentist. This will help them build a customized treatment plan for you that prioritizes both your oral and overall health.

1

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS)

WHAT IT IS:

MS is a disease that damages the body's central nervous system. It is one of the most debilitating diseases among young adults due to the nerve damage it causes, which can result in a significant lack of mobility over time.

HOW IT INFLUENCES ORAL HEALTH:

Depending on how the disease progresses, different areas of the body and nerves are damaged.

- Many MS patients have reported temporomandibular (TMJ) problems.
- MS patients may also develop numbness or tingling in their arms or hands, making it challenging to hold items like floss or a toothbrush.
 - Wrapping foam around the toothbrush can help patients get a better grip for daily brushing or try weighted gloves to steady their hand movements.

2

LUPUS

WHAT IT IS:

Lupus causes the immune system to attack healthy tissue in the body. Generally, lupus is more common in women and the signs and symptoms can include:

- Sores on the roof of the mouth
- Fatigue
- Skin rashes
- Joint pain

HOW IT INFLUENCES ORAL HEALTH:

- Salivary glands are often distressed by lupus, causing dry mouth.
- Medications used to treat lupus can also influence your oral health:
 - White or red patches in the mouth because of medication-induced thrush (a fungal infection)
 - Medications that suppress the immune system can increase the risk of oral cancer

3

CELIAC DISEASE

WHAT IT IS:

Celiac disease is a disease of the small intestine caused by exposure to gluten. Approximately 2 million Americans have celiac disease.

HOW IT INFLUENCES ORAL HEALTH:

- Children with celiac disease often have more problems with their tooth enamel. It's not uncommon for teeth to become yellow, discolored or even appear translucent.
 - In addition, tooth eruption might occur at a slower rate.
- Adults with celiac are more likely to experience:
 - Recurring canker sores
 - Dry mouth
 - A red, smooth, shiny tongue

4

PSORIASIS

WHAT IT IS:

Psoriasis is a condition driven by inflammation. While it mainly concerns the skin, it can also appear on other parts of the body and can have an effect on your overall health.

HOW IT INFLUENCES ORAL HEALTH:

- Psoriasis can result in dry, flaky patches around the lips, that can make brushing and flossing more difficult.
- Psoriasis inside the mouth is known as oral psoriasis — it's very rare and can be hard to diagnose.
- It's mostly found on the inside of the cheeks as inflamed red patches with either yellow or white edges. However, it can also appear as:
 - Peeling skin on the gums
 - Pain or burning while eating, especially with spicy food
 - Blisters in the mouth

5

TYPE 1 DIABETES

WHAT IT IS:

Type 1 diabetes is a disease of the pancreas, where the pancreas is not making enough insulin or not making any insulin at all. Insulin is what helps allow blood sugar to enter the cells and provide the energy the body needs.

HOW IT INFLUENCES ORAL HEALTH:

- Managing blood sugar levels is key to managing type 1 diabetes. It's also key in maintaining good oral health with type 1 diabetes.
- The higher the blood sugar levels, the higher the risk for:
 - Cavities
 - Early and advanced gum disease
 - Dry mouth

If you have any of the above conditions, consider asking your dentist if additional dental care treatments should be considered. Your dentist may recommend increasing the amount of cleanings per year or fluoride treatments. ■



Smile protection in your pocket

Delta Dental cares about improving the oral health and overall well-being of all Americans. That's why we created the free Delta Dental Mobile App — to make it easier for everyone to strengthen their smile.

Convenient features at your fingertips

Resources for everyone:

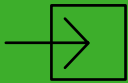


Compare nearby dentists to find the one that's right for you.



Use our Dental Care Cost Estimator to explore local cost ranges for common procedures.

Delta Dental members simply sign in for more:



Save your preferred dentist to make it easy to schedule your next checkup.



Access your mobile ID card or save it to your Apple Wallet or Google Wallet.



Look up detailed dental claims information from the last 18 months.



Review your dental coverage details including your deductible, maximums and more.



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