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How **sparkling water** affects your teeth

Spice up
breakfast with acai

GO ZERO WASTE
with your dental routine

5 tooth-friendly
veggies for your garden

in this issue of

grin!

LIFESTYLE



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Go green with your dental routine

Cut down on waste with these five tips.

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make you grin

WELLNESS



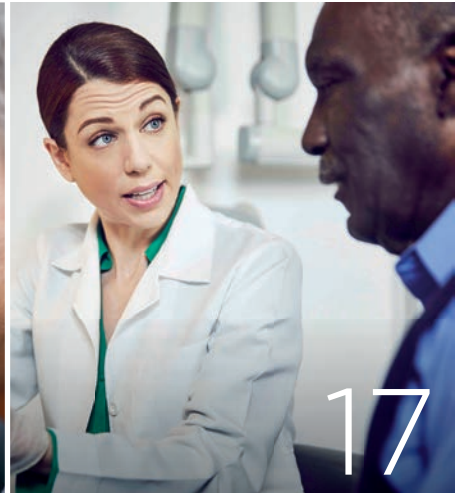
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Meet your teeth

Open wide to learn about the types, functions and lifecycle of your teeth.

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San Francisco Headquarters Move

After 30 years in the same building, our corporate headquarters is making not one, but two moves! Our main headquarters has moved right across the street to a new San Francisco space — and we're expanding our Bay Area presence to downtown Oakland. An East Bay office not only will allow many of our employees to work where they live, but also will help us continue to grow and succeed in line with our mission and purpose.

Apart from the physical addresses, there won't be many — if any — changes to everyday operations. The company's main lines of business, including correspondence, claims and contact centers, are located in the Rancho Cordova, CA, Alpharetta, GA, and Mechanicsburg, PA offices, so no interruptions are expected to our services.

On topic with Dr. Kohn

Select beverages with health in mind

As I've gotten older, I've become more aware of what I put into my body. I'm a believer of the old adage "You are what you eat." Everything you eat and drink can affect your overall health and well-being. The healthier the foods and drinks you consume, the better you will look, feel, sleep and perform in physical activities.

I've also realized the importance of staying hydrated throughout the day. When it comes to liquids, I generally stick with plain water. Tap water usually has the extra benefit of fluoride. Unsweetened coffee, iced tea and hot tea count as colored water in my book. Recent studies have pretty much dispelled the common belief that these drinks are dehydrating.

This issue's dental trend spotlight takes a look at non-sweetened carbonated water (page 16). Carbonation itself doesn't appear to be harmful when it comes to sparkling water, and drinking carbonated water can be a good source of hydration. Just watch out for those with added sugar or citric acids.

And if you're over 21 years old, the occasional beer, wine, scotch or other adult beverage can add to a happy, mellow life.



Meet Bill Kohn, DDS, Delta Dental's Vice President of Dental Science and Policy. Formerly the director of the Division of Oral Health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Kohn has timely tips and valuable insights to share as our resident dental expert.



Mouth-friendly recipe: Acai bowls

Acai bowls, pronounced “ah-sah-EE,” are packed with health-boosting vitamins and nutrients. Easy to customize, they’ll add tropical flavor to your morning meal.

Ingredients for one acai bowl:

100g packet unsweetened
frozen acai
1 frozen banana
½ cup juice or coconut milk
½ cup water

Topping ideas:

Fresh berries
Kiwi
Mango
Peaches
Granola
Nuts or seeds
Almond butter
Coconut chips

Directions:

- ① Run the frozen acai packet under hot water for 5 to 10 seconds.
- ② Cut the packet open and squeeze the acai into a blender.
- ③ Add the banana, orange juice and water.
- ④ Purée until completely smooth, adding more water or juice if needed.
- ⑤ Add your favorite toppings.
- ⑥ Enjoy!



History of oral health: Dental instruments

Dental instruments are high-tech, specialized and very effective, but they haven't always been that way. Take a look at the sometimes questionable tools of the past.

Tooth extraction took the form of a “bird beak” in the 14th century when Guy de Chauliac developed the **dental pelican**. Teeth were secured into the end of a curved shaft and then pulled out sideways.



Patients of George Fellows Harrington had to cover their ears during procedures. In 1864, he invented a **clockwork dental drill** that ran faster than previous drills but emitted a deafening noise.

Dental drills today run at hundreds of thousands of rotations per minute, while the earliest dental drills ran as slow as 2,000 rotations per minute.

1300s

Foot-treadle spinning wheels expanded from thread spooling to dental drilling in 1790. Invented by George Washington's personal dentist, John Greenwood, the **first dental drill was powered by a foot engine**. While it was difficult to use and operated at a super slow speed, it opened the gateway for future development.

1790

1864

1957

Dental instruments in the U.S. made a huge leap forward when John Borden invented the **first modern dental drill** in 1957. His high-speed, air-driven dental drill took only minutes to prep teeth for fillings.

Today

Today's **dental drills reach such high speeds by operating with air or electricity**. While the noise may scare some, they make dental work significantly easier and far more accurate.





Readers ask, we answer

Madison asks:
 “What is
 my dentist
 checking
 when she
 puts a dental
 instrument
 under and
 around my
 gums?”

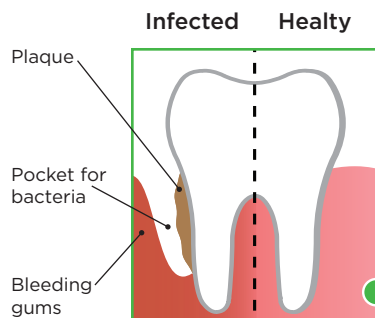
Hi, Madison. Your dentist is checking the health of your gums.

Around each tooth, there is a space, or “pocket,” where it connects to the gums. The deeper these pockets, the greater your likelihood of gum disease.

Deep pockets show that your gums have pulled away from your teeth. These pockets are the perfect place for bacteria to grow. Eventually, gum disease can weaken your gums and jawbone to the point that your teeth may loosen and fall out.

Your dentist uses a thin metal instrument, called a periodontal probe, to measure each periodontal pocket. You may hear your dentist calling out numbers to the dental hygienist. Each number refers to the depth of the pocket in millimeters.

A healthy pocket is usually 1–3 mm. A pocket of 4 mm or more usually suggests gum disease. Your dentist can determine whether treatments like scaling and root planing are needed to improve your gum health.



● The elements of gum disease

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

Turning off the
water while you brush
can save up to
200 GALLONS
per month!

GO GREEN

with your dental routine

A better environment starts little by little with eco-friendly choices and sustainable daily practices. Here are five steps you can start with.



1. Conserve water

Seventy percent of Earth is covered in water, but only a surprising 1% is suitable for human consumption. Make the most of this limited supply by turning off the water while you brush.

You can apply the same idea to other parts of your daily routine. Take showers instead of baths, turn off the water while soaping up and only run the dishwasher when it's full.

2. Reuse your toothbrush

Toothbrushes are typically made of hard-plastic handles and soft nylon bristles that can take hundreds of years to decompose.

Dentists recommend switching to a new toothbrush every three or four months, but that doesn't mean you have to throw yours away. Find ways to reuse old toothbrushes. The bristles are perfect for cleaning hard-to-reach places and for polishing jewelry. They also make great paintbrushes for craft projects.



Dentists recommend switching to a new toothbrush every

**3 OR 4
MONTHS.**



3. Choose eco-friendly toothbrushes

With a little bit of searching, you can find eco-friendly replacements for your current toothbrush. To divert waste from landfills, try a toothbrush that's compostable or made out of recycled plastic.



Look for floss that comes in recyclable or reusable containers.

4. Use biodegradable floss

Most floss is made of nylon fibers that take years to break down and are too small to be processed by normal recycling plants. Floss containers and floss picks are generally considered mixed materials that can't be recycled.

To reduce your impact on the planet, try biodegradable floss made from silk. Or, look for floss packaged in paper instead of plastic, or in a refillable, reusable container.

5. Recycle

Some organizations work with consumers and dentists' offices to recycle old toothbrushes, electric toothbrush heads, floss picks and more. These materials can be repurposed into plastic lumber and other consumer products. Check if your dentist's office participates in any recycling programs.



Make simple changes to your oral health habits to help maintain an environment that makes everyone smile.

2-word answers



Q:

Is it common to be able to curl your tongue into a tube?

A:

Very common.

This popular party trick engages the tongue's four intrinsic muscles — the ones that are only connected to other areas of the tongue. Your tongue's other muscles are called extrinsic muscles and attach to other parts of the mouth.

Because of its complex anatomy, the tongue is an all-star player when it comes to mouth function. It rarely gets tired even though it's responsible for distinguishing between flavors, facilitating chewing, initiating swallowing and more. It can curl, contract, extend and bend in any direction.

You can thank your tongue for turning noise from your vocal cords into meaningful words at a speed of up to 90 words a minute.

65%-81%
of people have no
problem rolling their
tongue, according to the
University of Delaware.

With all that activity, it's important to keep your tongue in tiptop shape by brushing it daily. The tongue provides an ideal environment for halitosis-causing bacteria, so make sure you're reaching all the way to the back of your tongue when you brush. If you experience bad breath, there's a good chance your tongue is the culprit.

Take care of your tongue, and it'll help you taste, talk and chew anytime you need it to!



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MEET YOUR TEETH

You use them all day long — for everything from meal time to picture time — but how well do you really know them? Take a time-out to get to know the different types of teeth you have.

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20
PRIMARY TEETH
(or baby teeth)
by age 3

When teeth grow in, they do so symmetrically, meaning that teeth on both the left and right sides appear at about the same time.

Children usually begin to lose their teeth around age 6 or 7 to provide room for adult teeth. Baby teeth fall out in roughly the same order they appear.

Wisdom teeth appear during the late teens and early 20s, adding up to a total of 32 teeth by around age 21.

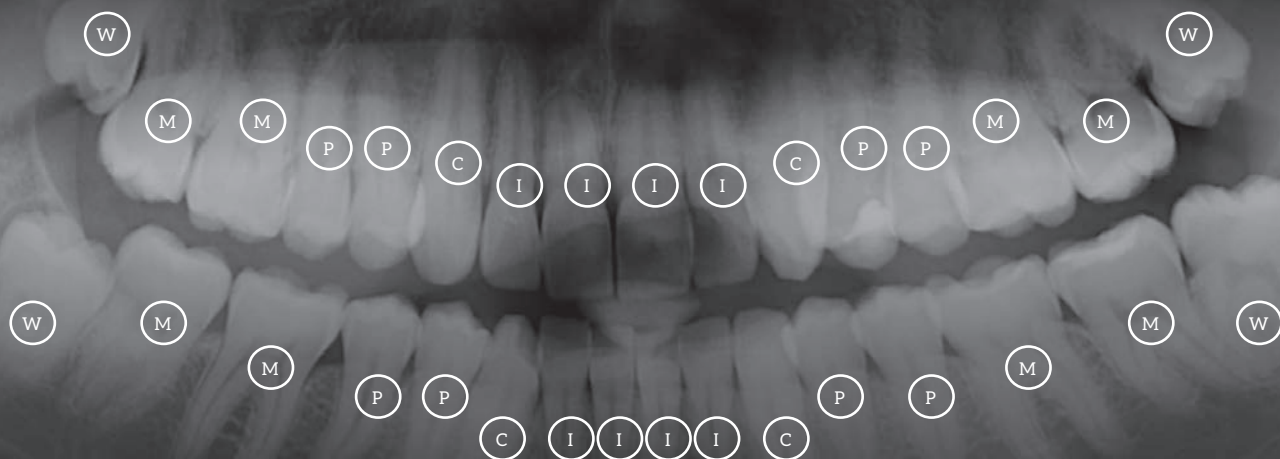
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32
PERMANENT
TEETH
by age 21



WHAT ARE THOSE 32 TEETH? LET'S TAKE A CLOSER LOOK.

WELLNESS



INCISORS *8 total*



Which are they?
The middle teeth on both the upper and lower jaws. You have two kinds: central incisors are straight in the middle of your mouth, and lateral incisors are to the left and right.

What are they for?
Besides stealing the show in your smile, incisors help you bite into food. Their narrow edges make them ideal for cutting into food to detach smaller, chewable pieces.

CANINES *4 total*



Which are they?
The pointed teeth located outside the incisors.

What are they for?
These teeth are much sharper than other teeth, which allows them to easily rip and tear apart food. Not surprisingly, you can find canine teeth in your dog's mouth too.

PREMOLARS *8 total*



Which are they?
The teeth located between the molars and canines. These teeth have only two points on the surface, while molars have four.

What are they for?
Like molars, premolars are flat and are responsible for grinding up food for swallowing. They also help move food from the front of the mouth to the back for chewing.

MOLARS *8 total*



Which are they?
The teeth located near the back of the mouth.

What are they for?
Molars are used to mash up food so it can easily be swallowed and digested. They have a flat base with a larger surface area to make it easier to grind food.

WISDOM TEETH *4 total*



Which are they?
Wisdom teeth are at the very back of the mouth. They typically appear around age 17. You might have them removed if they're causing problems or don't have enough room to fully erupt.

What are they for?
Wisdom teeth are another set of molars, for grinding up food.

Your spring smile list

Start spring right with these fun to-do's.

- ① Weave a flower crown with dandelions from your backyard.
- ② Hop on your bike and discover a new trail (but don't forget your helmet and mouthguard).
- ③ Surprise someone by leaving a May Day basket on the porch. Check out DIY ideas online.
- ④ Plant some tooth-friendly veggies in your garden. Find ideas on pages 18-19.
- ⑤ Stroll through the farmers market for fresh produce.
- ⑥ Enjoy colorful blooms and floral scents at your local botanical center.
- ⑦ Clean out your closets and donate unused items to charity.
- ⑧ Grab your friends for a round of mini golf.
- ⑨ Search for smooth, flat rocks to skip across a pond or lake.
- ⑩ Pull on your rain boots and splash in the biggest puddle you can find.



Dental trend spotlight: Sparkling water

Sparkling water is in, but is it good for your teeth?

What makes carbonated drinks bubbly?

The fizz comes from carbon dioxide, which quickly turns into carbonic acid.

Is carbonation harmful?

The level of acid in most sparkling water does not pose a threat to your teeth, according to the American Dental Association. When researchers soaked teeth in sparkling water versus regular water, they observed no significant difference in enamel erosion. More research is needed to fully explore the topic, but current knowledge suggests the coast is clear.

But isn't it acidic?

Even though fizzy water is more acidic than still water, its pH is lower than drinks like orange juice.

Try these tips to protect your teeth:

- **Avoid harmful additives.** Some flavors like lemon and orange contain citric acid, while others are sweetened with sugars, which can put you at greater risk for cavities.
- **Skip the citrus.** Adding a slice of lemon or lime increases acid levels and wears away tooth enamel.
- **Wash it down quickly.** It's better to drink it all in one sitting or with a meal rather than slowly sipping on it throughout the day.

Our verdict: Enjoy sparkling water in moderation, but make plain water your drink of choice. The fluoride added to most tap water gives your enamel a boost that helps protect it from decay.



How to detect oral cancer

About 51,540 people in the U.S. will be diagnosed with oral cavity and oropharyngeal cancers in 2018. Those numbers are staggering, but routine visits to the dentist can help. Because dentists may be able to detect oral cancer early, they can significantly improve the chances for successful treatment and provide greater treatment options.

There are easy steps you can take to prevent oral cancer, like doing a self-exam at home, limiting alcohol intake and not smoking or using other tobacco products. The American Cancer Society recommends doing a self-check about once a month. Simply use a mirror to get a good view of your mouth and take note of any issues.

If you notice any potential signs of oral cancer, let your dentist know.

Oral cancer indicators

Your dental hygienist and dentist look for signs and symptoms of oral cancer during your dental exam.

Common indicators include:

- White or red patches in your mouth
- A sore that won't heal
- Loose teeth
- Difficulty or pain when swallowing
- Difficulty wearing dentures
- A lump in your neck or cheek
- Pain in the mouth that doesn't go away

5

tooth-friendly veggies to plant in your garden

Spring is the perfect time to head into the garden and start planting.

If you're planning to tend a garden this year, consider planting the seeds for a healthy smile with these tooth-friendly veggies that taste good, too. Happy gardening!

1

Spinach

The abundance of calcium in spinach can help protect tooth enamel, strengthen your jaw bones and the bone that supports your teeth, and help prevent tooth loss. Spinach needs about six weeks of cooler temperatures, so plant it before the last spring frost.

2

Broccoli

With a full helping of vitamin C, broccoli helps strengthen gums and other soft tissues in the mouth. It also goes a long way toward helping defend against gum disease and tooth loss. Plus, broccoli provides a substantial amount of calcium that helps fortify bones and teeth.

3

Sweet potatoes

Sweet potatoes aren't just tasty — they also contain vitamin A, which helps keep mucous membranes healthy and encourages quick recovery from mouth problems like cuts and surgeries. Similar to broccoli, the vitamin C in sweet potatoes encourages healthy gums. Be careful not to overwater your sweet potatoes!

4

Kale

Kale packs a powerful punch (and a hearty crunch) of calcium, folic acid, vitamin A and vitamin K. Not only can a vitamin K deficiency negatively affect your mouth's healing process, but a healthy dose can help block substances that break down bones.

5

Carrots

Carrots have loads of vitamin A, which is critical for the formation of healthy tooth enamel. They also have high levels of fiber. Snacking on some crisp carrots after eating a meal can wash away food remnants, helping to prevent cavities. Make sure the soil isn't too heavy or your carrots may end up oddly shaped.

A man and a woman are riding a roller coaster. The man in the foreground is a Black man with a wide, joyful smile, showing his teeth. He is wearing a blue t-shirt. Behind him, a woman with blonde hair is also smiling and waving her hand. The roller coaster tracks are visible in the background against a blue sky with some clouds.

A smile can say
**THIS IS FUN,
I THINK**

Every smile tells a story. And each one can say something powerful. As the nation's leading dental benefits carrier, Delta Dental makes it easy to protect your smile with the largest network of dentists nationwide, quick answers and personalized service. **Learn more at deltadentalins.com.**

 **DELTA DENTAL®**

smile power™