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How bad are
British teeth?

DIY toothpaste

Are you ready
for a dental
emergency?

5 dental tips
for swimmers

in this issue of

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5 dental tips for swimmers

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On topic with Dr. Dill

Keep your kids cavity-free this summer

Crazy schedules and disrupted daily routines can be fun for kids, but they can cause oral health to fall by the wayside. That's why it's a good time for some simple ground rules that help keep summer fun *and* healthy.

Kids stay up late, go to sleepovers, leave for camps and visit relatives. These can all become excuses to forget about good oral hygiene. Remind your kids to pack a toothbrush, fluoride toothpaste, floss and a retainer (if they wear one). Insist that they make taking care of their teeth a priority — in the morning and in the evening.

Sugary drinks, ice cream, candy, fast food and more snacking than usual can easily become part of your summer rhythm. Keep an eye on your child's diet and stock up on healthy snacks like fresh fruits and vegetables. Have water on hand to keep your kids refreshed.

Summer is also the time for swimming, biking, running and general horsing around. Mouth injuries can occur during these activities. Take precautions by wearing a mouth guard during sports and being prepared for accidents. See page 17 for ways to plan for an emergency and items to include in an emergency dental kit.



Finally, schedule a dental checkup before school begins. If you're rushing to finish your to-do list as summer comes to an end, the Delta Dental mobile app can help you schedule appointments quickly and easily. Sign in to view available times in your dentist's schedule*, then book and manage your appointments on your device. Plus, the app lets you access claims information, view coverage details, estimate procedure costs and more.

Starting off the school year with good oral health will help ensure fewer lost school days for your child and fewer lost work days for you.



Meet Joseph Dill, DDS, Delta Dental's Vice President of Dental Science and Network Strategy. With over 30 years of experience in the dental field, including eight in private practice and 16 in dental insurance, Dr. Dill provides expert insights and helpful advice to keep you smiling bright.

*Appointment scheduling is powered by our partners at Brighter™. Availability may vary by geographic area and individual dentist participation in Brighter Schedule™.

Mouth-friendly recipe: Watermelon, feta and mint salad

Looking for a new summertime staple? This refreshing salad is sure to become a favorite. Quick and easy to make, it features thirst-quenching watermelon and an irresistible combination of sweet and savory flavors.

Ingredients:

6 cups cubed watermelon
¾ cup crumbled feta cheese
¼ cup thinly sliced red onion
¼ cup chopped fresh mint
½ tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Carefully toss all the ingredients together in a large bowl. Enjoy!



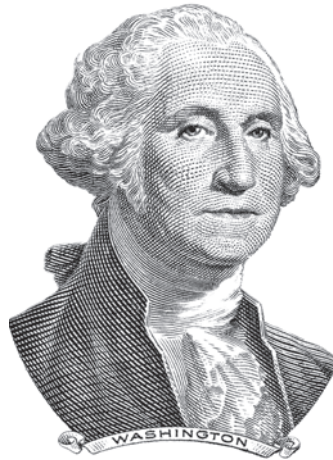
History of oral health: Founding Fathers and early patriots

Take a look back at the dental health of the men who helped create the United States.



Paul Revere

You've probably heard of his nighttime ride to alert the colonial militia during the Revolutionary War. But did you know that Paul Revere was also a dentist? The early patriot not only worked as a silversmith in Boston but also cleaned teeth and sold dentures. Plus, he's also thought to be the first person to identify a body by its teeth. He verified the death of his friend, Dr. Joseph Warren, when he recognized the dental bridge he had made for Warren.



George Washington

The country's first president rarely smiled, and his dentures may have been why. Washington wore dentures made of horse, cow and human teeth, which forced his lips to protrude awkwardly. What's more, he considered dentures a sign of weakness.



John Adams

The second president of the U.S. didn't have a full set of teeth. There were two factors that contributed to his tooth decay. He loved sweets, and he believed throwing up was the cure for a number of diseases. Because Adams refused to wear dentures, it was difficult to understand him when he spoke.



Thomas Jefferson

The main author of the Declaration of Independence kept his teeth in remarkably good condition for the period. When Jefferson was 81 years old, he said he'd only lost a single adult tooth in his lifetime.

Did you know?

The first medically trained dentist in America set up his practice in 1760.

Did you know?

George Washington never had wooden teeth. His dentures are on display at the National Museum of Dental History in Baltimore, Maryland.



Readers ask, we answer

Janice asks:
“Is it OK to
drink out
of a garden
hose?”

Hi, Janice. It may be tempting to turn the spigot and take a sip, but drinking water from a hose isn't a good idea. Garden hoses can contain a host of chemicals that can be harmful to children and adults.

As a garden hose sits between uses, the water inside collects bacteria and chemicals from the hose's plastic tubing. In addition, the brass ring at the opening can contain even more contaminants. This contamination is worsened if the hose has been sitting in the sun for extended periods of time.

Lead is also a big concern. Some hoses leach unsafe levels of lead into water, according to a [2016 study](#) by the Ann Arbor Ecology Center. Not only can lead exposure increase your risk of cavities, it's also potentially fatal. Linked to severe mental and physical developmental issues, lead is especially harmful for children under 6.

So forget about the hose. Bring a bottle of water with you into the yard, or just head back into the house for a glass from the tap.

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

A woman with dark hair is smiling and holding up her swimming goggles. She is on a beach with waves in the background. Another person is visible in the water in the background.

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5 dental tips for swimmers

Swimming & your teeth



Swimming is a great way to stay cool this summer. But spending too much time in the pool or ocean can affect your teeth. Here's how, and what you can do to protect your mouth.

1. Pack your retainers away.

Before you jump in, take out removable dental appliances like retainers. Store them safely in a container far away from the water. Retainers can fall out in the water and get damaged or lost. The chlorinated water in pools can also damage the plastic.

If you wear full or partial dentures, you don't have to take them out when you go swimming. However, water can loosen the suction that keeps your dentures attached, so use a denture adhesive to secure their fit.

2. Avoid tooth squeeze.

If you're a scuba diver, you might experience a condition called "tooth squeeze" (or barodontalgia) from pressure changes in deep water. When this happens, air inside your teeth contracts to match the outside pressure. This painful condition can damage fillings, crowns and dentures. Before your next dive, ask your dentist to check your mouth for untreated decay or loose restorations.

3. Walk, don't run.

Slow down when you're at the pool. If you slip on the wet surface, it's easy to fall and chip or lose a tooth.

4. Don't overchlorinate.

If you have your own pool, make sure to check the chlorine levels with a professional. Chlorine is a strong base, and if it isn't diluted properly, it can wear away the enamel on your teeth, leaving them brittle and sensitive.



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5. Get regular cleanings.

The longer your teeth are exposed to chlorinated water, the more likely you are to develop swimmer's calculus. Chlorine can deposit residue on your teeth, turning them yellow or brown after constant exposure. This condition typically affects swimmers who spend over six hours a week in chemically treated water.

Sound familiar? Let your dentist know if you notice these stains on your teeth or your children's teeth. Your dentist can remove the stains, offer tips to avoid them and, if it's a chronic issue, he or she may recommend more frequent cleanings.

2-word answers



Q:

Do the British really have worse teeth than Americans?

A:

Not really.

From casual jokes to media portrayals, the assumption that the British have worse teeth than Americans is well known. On TV, British characters are often shown with faded smiles and chipped teeth, and American actors are more likely than their British counterparts to bleach and straighten their teeth.

But do Brits actually have worse teeth? Here's how the numbers stack up, according to a [2015 study](#) in the BMJ.

Americans			British		
31.4%	13.5%	7.31%	30.8%	15.1%	6.97%
oral health as "less than good"	oral health issues negatively impact their life	missing teeth	oral health as "less than good"	oral health issues negatively impact their life	missing teeth

The results don't support the stereotypes. Americans and Brits ranked similarly in the study's measures of oral health. In some areas, the British lagged behind, and in other areas, Americans were worse off. So why are the Brits known for having bad teeth?

The answer may be aesthetics, which wasn't considered in the study. Healthy teeth aren't necessarily gleaming white.

Treatments like teeth whitening and orthodontics are more popular in the United States than the United Kingdom. Only 3% of the U.K. population has undergone teeth whitening, according to the BBC. That's compared to 14% of the U.S. population.

But the Brits may be catching up: private spending on cosmetic dental work in the U.K. is up 27% since 2010, according to the market research group Mintel.

YOUR GUIDE TO A HEALTHY FAIR

Before you head to the fairgrounds,
check out what you can do to
protect your teeth.





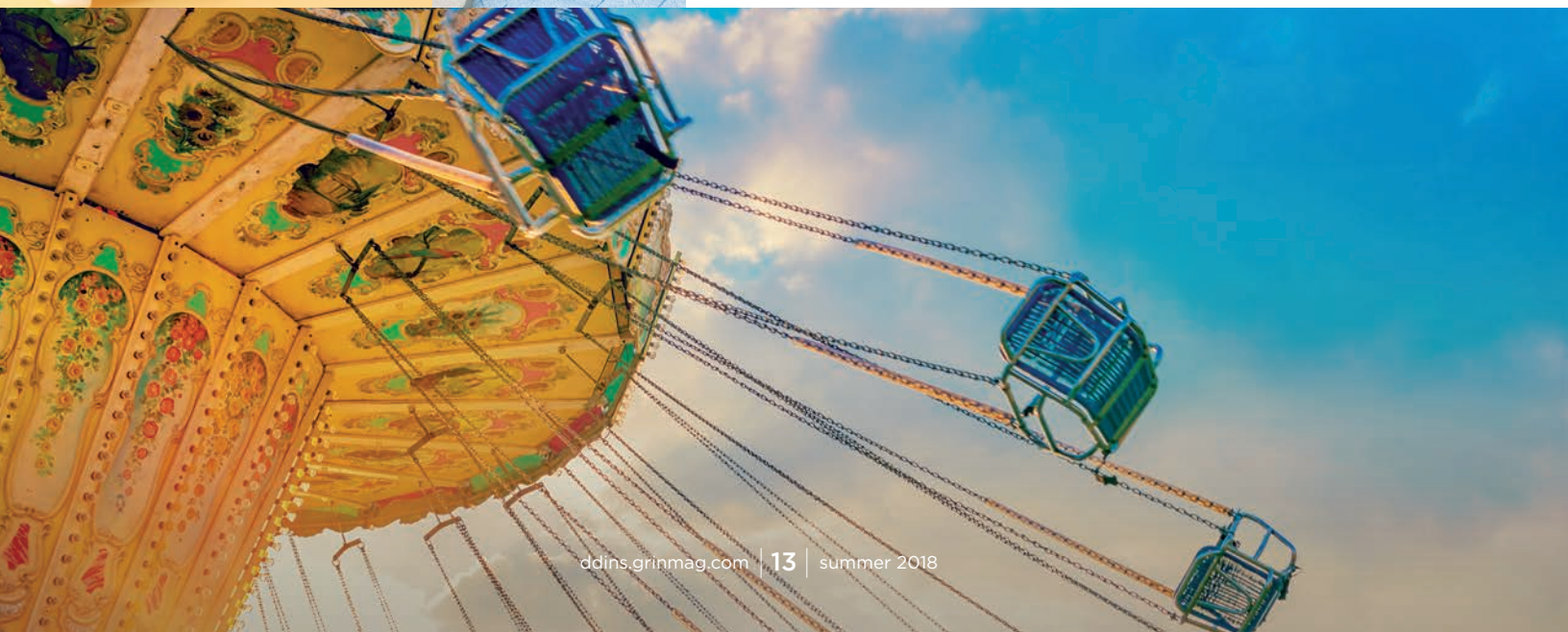
1. Cut back on sugar

Moderation is key at the fair. While it's fine to indulge in sweets here and there, avoid foods with especially high volumes of sugar like funnel cakes and fried candy bars. All that sugar feeds cavity-causing bacteria.

2. Bring a toothbrush (or some gum)

When you can't say no to that deep-fried cookie dough calling your name, follow it up with the oral health basics. If you can, pack a travel-size toothbrush, fluoride toothpaste and floss. Stop by the restroom after meals to clean your teeth.

Don't have a toothbrush handy? Chew sugar-free gum to reduce leftover food particles until the next time you can brush.





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Did you know?

The largest state fair in the country takes place in one of the largest states: Texas!

Cotton candy was invented by a dentist from Nashville. It made its public debut at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904.

The Georgia State Fair has a one-of-a-kind derby. Instead of traditional jockeys on horses, monkeys ride dogs and race for the top prize.

3. Choose healthy snacks

Amid a bounty of sweets, the fair offers some healthy options, too. Opt for a fresh fruit smoothie, meat or veggie kabob, roasted nuts and a salad. Or, bring your own healthy snacks. Celery sticks, baby carrots and apple slices are easy-to-pack options that are refreshing and low in sugar.

4. Stay hydrated

Drink water throughout the day to quench your thirst and wash away cavity-causing acid and bacteria.

5. Be prepared

Between the bumper cars and the candied apples, your teeth face multiple risks at the fair. Keep your dentist's phone number and a map to the exit on hand in case of a dental emergency (see page 17 for more tips).

This summer, don't forget to check out your local county or state fair. Keep these tips in mind, and you'll be sure to leave with great memories and healthy smile.



Your summer smile list

Get active this summer with these fun ideas.

- ① Go canoeing in a nearby river or bay.
- ② Host a neighborhood BBQ. Check out the tips on pages 18-19.
- ③ Organize a soccer game with friends. Don't forget your mouthguard!
- ④ Go on a new hike. Remember to apply lip balm with an SPF 30+ rating!
- ⑤ Play Marco Polo at the pool.
- ⑥ Show off your artsy side with sidewalk chalk.
- ⑦ Camp out in the backyard.
- ⑧ Set up a hummingbird feeder to attract nature's fastest feathered friend.
- ⑨ Load the car with blankets and healthy snacks to see a drive-in movie.
- ⑩ Pack a basket and enjoy a picnic.



Dental trend spotlight: DIY toothpaste

Before toothpaste was produced commercially, many people made their own. Some do-it-yourself enthusiasts are trying to bring this tradition back. DIY toothpaste recipes are a dime a dozen online. But before you toss your tube in the trash, here's what you should know about homemade toothpaste.

What is DIY toothpaste?

Homemade toothpastes can vary from pastes to powders. Popular ingredients include coconut oil, baking soda, sea salt, cacao nibs and essential oils. Some people add sweeteners such as xylitol or stevia. Proponents tout the transparency of homemade toothpaste (there are no hidden ingredients), the low cost and the fact there's no plastic packaging to throw out at the end.

Does it work? Are there any risks?

Homemade toothpaste can be effective in removing plaque, according to a 2017 study in the IOSR Journal of Dental and Medical Sciences. The study examined a homemade toothpaste made of coconut oil, baking soda and stevia.

However, DIY toothpaste lacks a key ingredient of commercial toothpaste: fluoride. The huge decline in tooth decay over the last century is, in part, thanks to this essential mineral.

For a brand of toothpaste to receive the American Dental Association's "seal of acceptance," it must contain fluoride. The mineral strengthens enamel and reduces the risk of cavities.

Store-bought toothpastes contain the proper amounts of fluoride to fight tooth decay, so replacing them with DIY toothpastes can cause a significant deficiency in fluoride exposure. In addition to fluoride, toothpastes may contain active ingredients that help in other ways, such as reducing tooth sensitivity, whitening teeth or fighting gingivitis and tartar buildup. Commercial toothpastes are regulated by the Food and Drug Administration. You don't get this benefit with a homemade concoction.

What's more, DIY toothpaste recipes sometimes contain ingredients that can be harmful for your mouth, such as lemon juice, essential oils and hydrogen peroxide.

Our verdict: Play it safe with store-bought toothpaste. Look for labels that include the ADA seal of approval, and choose larger tubes to reduce waste. In other ways, such as reducing tooth sensitivity, whitening teeth, fighting gingivitis and tartar buildup, and preventing enamel erosion and bad breath.

Are you ready for a dental emergency?

You've heard of disaster emergency kits. You may have practiced fire drills, earthquake drills or tornado drills. But you have ever planned for a dental emergency?

By preparing now, you'll be better able to handle any unexpected dental emergencies. Keep these strategies in mind, and don't forget to gather supplies for your dental emergency kit.

1. Talk to your dentist

During your next appointment, ask your dentist who to contact if a dental emergency strikes. Some dentists provide room in their schedules during the day to accommodate emergency patients. If yours is not available to address an issue when you call, your dental office may be able to refer you to another dentist. And don't forget to keep your dentist's phone number in your wallet.

2. Consider your emergency care options.

If a dental emergency happens at night or over the weekend, you have a couple of options. Your dentist may have an after-hours line to call. Ask for the number during your next appointment and keep it handy.

Depending on your emergency, urgent care or the emergency room may be the best option. Physicians at these facilities can't provide permanent dental repair, but they can help manage the pain. Your dental benefits won't apply, so check your medical plan for emergency coverage.

3. Learn home remedies.

Some dental emergencies can be handled at home.

- **Toothaches** can usually be addressed at home with a pain reliever and a cold compress followed by a visit to your dentist.
- Treat **bitten tongues and lips** by washing the area gently and applying a cold compress. If the wound doesn't stop bleeding, go to the nearest urgent care or emergency room.
- If a **permanent tooth is knocked out**, visit your dentist as soon as possible. In the meantime, take immediate steps to preserve the tooth. Avoid touching the tooth's root. Gently rinse it with milk or water without scrubbing off any remaining tissue. Try to place it back in the socket and hold it in place. If you can't, put the tooth in milk or water. The quicker you see a dentist, the greater the chance of saving the tooth.
- If your child's **baby tooth is knocked out**, apply pressure to the area to stop the bleeding. Don't place it back in the socket. This can harm the permanent tooth growing beneath it, and it carries the risk of swallowing the tooth.

Create a dental emergency

- A small container with a sealable lid
- Your dentist's contact information
- Gauze and bandages
- A cloth
- Dental wax for kids with braces
- Temporary filling material
- Pain reliever

Store your kit in the car, and carry it with you on vacation.

6

tips for your summer BBQ

This summer, kick back at a barbecue with your friends and family. But keep these tips in mind to protect your teeth.

1 Skip the BBQ sauce
BBQ sauce are typically high in sugar. That's bad news for your teeth. But skipping sugar doesn't have to mean sacrificing flavor. Consider using a sugar-free dry rub to season your meat dishes. For a quick mix, combine salt, black pepper, paprika and garlic.



2 Rethink your sides
When loading up your plate, go for sides low in sugar and carbs. Roasted veggies make a delicious alternative to carb-rich pasta salad. Or, try out a new salad recipe (see page 5).



3 Keep floss (not toothpicks) handy
When the remnants of your steak or corn on the cob end up in your teeth, don't reach for a toothpick. Floss is gentler on your gums and better at getting rid of those annoying bits of food.



4 Skip the ice
Chewing on ice cubes can cause cracked teeth and damaged enamel. To get the same refreshing effect without a potential dental emergency (see page 17), just chill your drinks in the fridge or cooler.

5 Cut back on alcohol
High in sugar and with a tendency to dry out the mouth, alcohol is a quick route to tooth decay. Mix things up by alternating glasses of water with your adult beverages. This trick can lower your chance of cavities — and of waking up the next morning with a headache.



6 Stay cool with fruitsicles
With no added sugar, these frozen fruit pops are a sweet way to cool down. And they're easy to make. To prepare them, cut up an assortment of fruits into small pieces. Fill paper cups (or a popsicle mold) with fruit (such as kiwi, watermelon and strawberries), place a craft stick in the middle, and then pour with diluted fruit juice. Freeze overnight for a delicious dessert the next day.



A photograph of two women sitting at a dark, reflective table in a dimly lit room with a stone wall background. The woman on the left has long dark hair and is wearing a dark grey off-the-shoulder sweater. The woman on the right has shoulder-length brown hair and is wearing a dark blue sleeveless top. They are both smiling broadly and laughing, with the woman on the left whispering into the ear of the woman on the right. On the table in front of them are three glasses: two tall glasses with ice and lemon, and one shorter glass with ice. The text 'A smile can say' is written in a script font above a white-outlined box containing the phrase 'I CAN'T REPEAT IT BUT IT'S GOOD' in a bold, sans-serif font.

/ A smile can say
**I CAN'T REPEAT IT
BUT IT'S GOOD**

Every smile tells a story. And each one can say something powerful. As the nation's leading dental benefits provider, 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[™]