



Tongue 'n' Cheek... and Teeth, too!



Meet the dental team

A team is defined as a group of people who come together to achieve a common goal. In dentistry, each dental team member has a different skill set and plays an important role in running an efficient and successful practice while providing high-quality care to patients.

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Sign up for **FREE**, quarterly **Tongue 'n' Cheek...and Teeth, too!** patient e-newsletter, so you don't miss important oral health news and dental tips!



Dentists

Leading the dental team is the dentist, a doctor specializing in oral health who has earned either a doctor of dental medicine (DMD) degree or a doctor of dental surgery (DDS) degree.

Dentists who have a DMD or DDS degree have the same education from an accredited dental school. Both have the same curriculum requirements set by the American Dental Association.

Dentist's responsibilities include:

- Diagnosing oral diseases
- Educating patient's about the importance of oral health and disease prevention
- Developing treatment plans to maintain or restore the oral health of their patients
- Interpreting X-rays and diagnostic tests
- Ensuring the safe administration of anesthetics
- Monitoring growth and

development of the teeth and jaws

- Performing surgical procedures on the teeth, bone and soft tissues of the oral cavity

Dentists' areas of care include not only their patients' teeth and gums but also the muscles of the head, neck and jaw and the tongue, salivary glands and nervous system of the head and neck. During a comprehensive exam, dentists examine the teeth and gums, and they also look for lumps, swellings or discolorations — any abnormality.

When appropriate, they perform procedures, such as biopsies, diagnostic tests for chronic or infectious diseases, salivary gland function and screening tests for oral cancer.

In addition, dentists can spot early warning signs in the mouth that may indicate disease elsewhere in the body. Dentists' training also enables them to recognize situations that warrant referring patients

for care by dental specialists or physicians. (Please see page 3 for information about dentists' educational and licensing requirements.)

Other members of the dental team include dental hygienists, dental assistants, lab technicians and office management staff.

Dental hygienists

Dental hygienists use their knowledge and clinical skills to focus on preventing and treating oral diseases so as to protect teeth, gums and a patients' total health.

The registered dental hygienist or RDH credential identifies a dental hygienist as a licensed oral health professional.

Duties vary, but often includes:

- Reviewing patients' health history and taking blood pressure
- Taking and developing X-rays
- Removing plaque from all surfaces of the teeth
- Applying preventive materials to the teeth (e.g., sealants, fluoride varnish)
- Teaching effective ways to brush and floss
- Counseling patients about

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Expanded health coverage spurs dental visit increase for college-age adults

Preventive dental care is important, effective and affordable for almost everyone - even those without dental benefits or "insurance".

More college students saw a dentist before heading back to campus this fall, according to a paper published in the journal *Medical Care* which signals a positive upswing in the number of young adults seeking and receiving routine dental care.

Analyzing post-health care reform data from 2010-12, the authors found the Affordable Care Act's expanded dependent coverage provision (allows parents or guardians to keep children on their medical plans up to age 26) increased access to dental care for adults ages 19-25 by nearly seven points to 45 percent.

Under ACA, some employers



The WDA Own Your Smile oral health literacy TV spot "Today" encourages adults to avoid the cost and pain of untreated dental disease by seeking affordable, preventive care in WDA member dentists' offices.

also voluntarily expanded dental coverage along with medical coverage.

Whether in college or suiting up for a post-graduation job, the Wisconsin Dental Association encourages young adults to Own Your Smile and:

- Brush two minutes, twice a day with fluoride toothpaste that has earned the American Dental Association Seal of Acceptance
 - Floss daily
 - Eat a balanced diet
 - Drink fluoridated water
 - Chew sugarless gum with ADA Seal of Acceptance for 20 minutes after a meal to help prevent tooth decay
- Don't use tobacco products
- Don't get oral piercings
- Schedule regular, preventive care in a WDA member's dental home practice

Preventive dental care is important, effective and affordable for almost everyone - even those without dental benefits or "insurance".

ADA Dental Symptom Checker app available

Use the American Dental Association's Dental Symptom Checker to identify possible conditions, treatments and actions to take regarding your oral health.

The free app can be downloaded in iTunes or Google Play.

The ADA Dental Symptom Checker is not meant to diagnose or replace the role of the dentist. In fact, seeing a dentist or physician is emphasized in most cases.



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good nutrition and its impact on oral health

In Wisconsin, there are 11 accredited, two-year dental hygiene training programs. Upon graduation, national board written and clinical exams must be passed before one can be licensed to work in a dental office.

To receive a license renewal, Wisconsin dental hygienists must complete 12 hours of continuing education, including two CE credits related to infection control to renew their licenses every two years.

Dental assistants

Dental assistants perform many tasks requiring both interpersonal and technical skills.

Duties include:

- Assisting the dentist during

a variety of treatment procedures

- Taking and developing X-rays
- Asking about the patient's medical history and taking blood pressure
- Providing patients with instructions for oral care following surgery or other dental treatment procedures, such as the placement of a filling
- Teaching patients oral hygiene strategies to maintain oral health

Wisconsin has 11 accredited, dental assisting training programs. Careers can also begin without college-level courses through on-the-job training in a dental office or high school study programs.



Dental lab technicians

Dental lab technicians (DLABT) or certified dental technicians (CDT) work with a variety of materials, instruments and equipment to create dental prostheses.

Although they seldom work directly with patients, they are valuable dental team members.

Technicians follow detailed instructions from a dentist to:

- Use impressions of a patient's teeth to create dentures, removable partial dentures, crowns, veneers and orthodontic appliances

- Work with gold, chrome and ceramic materials to hand-craft patient items

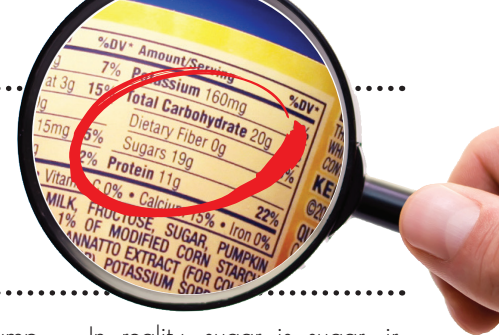
Although a technical college education is encouraged, careers can start without a college degree through on-the-job training in dental labs or dental offices.

Milwaukee Area Technical College offers a two-semester lab tech diploma program.

If you have thought about a career in dentistry, talk with your dentist and his/her team to learn more and visit WDA.org's Education and Careers page under the Your Oral Health tab.

Become a label detective

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If you tried to swallow 30 teaspoons of table sugar on any given day, it would probably be difficult. However, the average American consumes this amount of sugar every day in frozen pizzas, cereals, breads, soups, condiments, yogurt and beverages.

The food and beverage industry has slowly added sugar to almost everything processed.

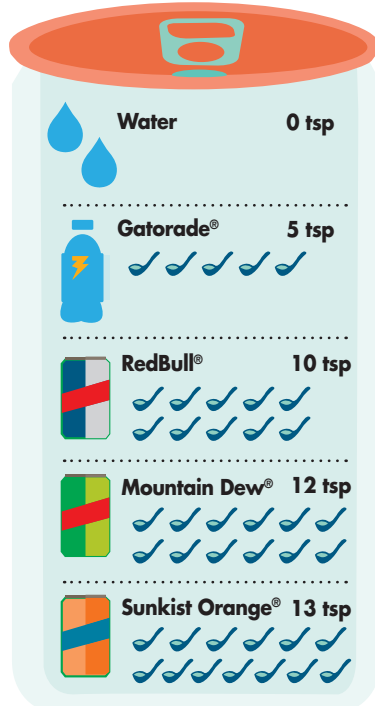
Sugar consumption has been on a steady rise in this country since the 1950s, but so has diabetes, obesity and cardiovascular diseases. Coincidental? You decide.

Today, young people consume more sugary beverages than milk, ultimately contributing to tooth decay.

So what can be done? A great place to start is to become label detectives.

In 2009, the American Heart Association took a stand and published recommendations to

How much sugar does your drink contain?



Source: Minnesota Dental Association

help slash daily sugar consumption.

Instead of indulging in the average 30 teaspoons of daily sugar, the AHA recommends limiting daily consumption to 6 1/2 teaspoon or 25 grams for women and 9 1/2 teaspoons or 38 grams for men.

The average soda has 8 teaspoons of added sugar. Many single servings of yogurts have around 5 teaspoons and not surprisingly, the aisles of processed cookies are loaded with added sugars.

This task can be complicated due to the various names manufacturers use in their ingredient lists to describe sugar.

High-fructose corn syrup has received bad press and a few manufacturers have started marketing products with "No HFCS" listed on the front of their products to tell consumers their products are healthy.

In reality, sugar is sugar, irrespective of the name. Raw organic sugar and agave syrup are both sugars. Juice concentrate and evaporated cane juice are just different names for sugar.

Being a label detective requires consumers to look for other names of sugar buried in the long list of ingredients.

Recent data indicates fructose consumption results in increased fat accumulation, triglycerides and blood pressure, as well as decreased insulin sensitivity. All of which are associated with increased risk for cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes.

Empty calories from added sugar do not provide essential nutrients, yet contribute to weight gain. It appears as though the stakes are high when it comes to America's sugar obsession.

Now is the time to slash sugar consumption.

Doctors of oral health

Dentists help people maintain and improve their oral health, quality of life and appearance. They also are involved with scientific advancement to treat oral health and detect other diseases such as cancer and diabetes.

So what does it take to become a dentist?

Dental schools generally require applicants to hold bachelor's degrees before gaining admission. Although no specific pre-dental major is required, coursework in biology, chemistry and physics are necessary to apply to dental school.

There are more than 60 dental schools in the United States accredited by the American Dental Association's Commission on Dental Accreditation and offer

either the doctor of dental surgery or doctor of dental medicine degree.

Dental specialties

- Dental Public Health
 - Endodontics
- Oral and maxillofacial pathology
- Oral and maxillofacial radiology
- Oral and maxillofacial surgery
 - Orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics
 - Pediatric dentistry
 - Periodontics
 - Prosthodontics

Before applying, students must take the Dental Admission Test or DAT, which assesses academic capacity and scientific knowledge. These scores, as well as grade

point averages, interviews and letters of recommendation are all considered.

In Wisconsin, Marquette University School of Dentistry is Wisconsin's only dental school and offers a DDS degree. Each year, MUSOD enrolls only 100 freshmen to ensure every student receives personal attention.

Upon completion of the four-year curriculum, MUSOD students must pass a rigorous national written exam and a clinical licensing exam before obtaining their licenses.

The ADA recognizes nine specialties (see left). All of them require two to four years of additional education. A postgraduate residency also may be required, usually lasting up to two years.



The incoming class of 100 dental students is welcomed at Marquette University School of Dentistry's white coat ceremony in August 2014.

Wisconsin dentists (dental hygienists) are licensed by the Dentistry Examining Board under the state Department of Safety and Professional Services.

In order to keep their licenses, dentists must meet continuing education requirements, so they stay up-to-date on the latest scientific and clinical developments.

Every two years, Wisconsin dentists must obtain a minimum of 30 hours of CE to renew their licenses.

E-cigarettes: A growing concern

Some studies concluded devices contained traces of hazardous materials, including a chemical found in antifreeze.

Smoking of any kind is bad. And, so is nicotine itself. Studies show nicotine alone may cause harm to the mouth, gums and tongue. It may also greatly contribute to the development of a dry mouth, gingivitis and gum disease. Nicotine may increase the incidence of tooth loss and dental decay.

There is no question smoking poses severe risks, but what about electronic cigarettes?

Electronic cigarettes or e-cigs have risen to the forefront as a favorable alternative to cigarette smoking.

They have started to take off in the last decade with more than 250 brands and flavors, like watermelon, pink bubble gum and bacon. An estimated 4 million Americans use them, according to the Tobacco Vapor Electronic Cigarette Association.

E-cigs are battery operated nicotine inhalers that consist of a battery, a cartridge and an LED that lights up at the end when puffed on to simulate the burn of tobacco.

According to the Public Health Law Center, devices resemble

cigarettes, cigars or pipes and produce a vapor caused from the heating of an e-liquid containing nicotine, flavoring and other additives.

Some studies concluded devices contained traces of hazardous materials, including a chemical found in antifreeze. Further studies are needed to determine the long-term effects of breathing vapors in.

Wisconsin's indoor smoking ban, which in 2010 prohibited smoking in bars, restaurants, private clubs, schools, hotels, clinics and other workplaces, doesn't apply to e-cigs. It is up to individual employers if they want to restrict e-cigarettes in smoke-free areas.

Other reasons to be concerned:

- No regulation on the manufacture and sale of e-cigs to protect consumers - Contents vary widely and don't always match the ingredients listed on labels.
- Not approved by the Food and Drug Administration to help

smokers quit - The combination of cessation counseling and FDA-approved medications, such as patches, lozenges and gum, are the most effective strategy.

- Doesn't force smokers to quit - Simply gives another option.
- Appeal to youth - Candy-like



flavors such as grape, are marketed as better smelling, cheaper and a guilt-free alternative to smoking.

Quitting the use of tobacco products - whether they are cigarettes, e-cigs or chew - is your best option for maintaining your smile and health.

For more information, talk with your dentist and visit tobwis.org for other resources.



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The Wisconsin Dental Association is pleased to make *Tongue 'n' Cheek... and Teeth, too!* available to our member dentists and their patients as a way of communicating oral health information and promoting quality care.

Information in this publication is provided as patient education only and cannot substitute for the judgment your dentist brings to individual clinical situations. Nothing contained herein is intended as professional dental or medical advice or to be used for diagnosis or treatment. Be sure to consult your dentist with questions about any dental condition.

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We welcome your comments and suggestions regarding this publication.

Be sure to visit us online for the latest news on everything dental!

WDA.org



Tongue 'n' Cheek...and Teeth, too! earns regional, national awards

The Wisconsin Dental Association's patient newsletter (print and electronic) *Tongue 'n' Cheek...and Teeth, too!* has been honored with a 2014 Golden Apple Award from the American Dental Association for Excellence in Dental Health Promotion to the Public and a Paragon Award of Merit in the newsletter category from the Public Relations Society of America - Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter.

The TNC is designed to communicate oral health information, promote quality care, deliver key WDA messages,

provide a valued patient-education tool for member dentists and dental hygienists and strengthen the WDA brand among prospective members, media and the general public.

The WDA began publishing the twice-a-year print TNC in October 2011 (mails with the WDA Journal). The first issue of the electronic TNC launched in February 2013 and online subscriptions continue to grow.

View past issues of TNC and subscribe to the e-version at <http://www.wda.org/your-oral-health/patient-newsletter>.

