

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



## Easing dental anxiety

There are varying degrees of dental anxiety and phobia. At the extreme, a person with dental phobia may never see a dentist. Others may force themselves to go, but they may not sleep the night before.

Dental anxiety and phobia is common among children and adults. In fact, an estimated 92 million dental patients avoid the dentist because of fear, according to the Journal of the American Dental Association.

There are varying degrees of dental anxiety and phobia. At the extreme, a person with dental phobia may never see a dentist. Others may force themselves to go, but they may not sleep the night before.

It's not uncommon for people to feel sick or, in some cases, to actually get sick while in the waiting room.

People develop dental anxieties and phobias for different reasons.

"Many of my fearful patients have been avoiding the dental office for 30 years. The fear is so real that it is easier to avoid the dental care and live with the pain associated with dental disease. However, these diseases don't go away and only worsen over time. Once the fearful patient becomes motivated to see the dentist to relieve the pain, the solution normally is significantly more invasive, painful and costly due to the amount of time the disease has had to cause damage.

This only increases the anxiety and increases future avoidance. We call this the cycle of fear." Dr. Barrett Straub, a general dentist in Port Washington, said.



Establish a signal, such as raising your hands when you need a break.

"You can help calm jitters by avoiding drinking coffee and eating sugar at least six hours before your dental visit. I also recommend my patients concentrate on breathing naturally in the chair, since holding your breath increases anxiety," Dr. Straub said.

### Sedation dentistry

Using medication may be recommended by your dentist to help relax during dental procedures.

### Sedation dentistry includes:

**Inhaled minimal sedation** - The patient breathes nitrous oxide or "laughing gas" combined with oxygen through a mask.

**Oral sedation** - Depending on the dose, oral sedation can range from minimal to moderate. The process begins by taking a sedative pill like Halcion, which is similar to Valium, about an hour before treatment. The pill makes patients feel drowsy, although they will still be awake.

**IV moderate sedation** - Sedative drug is received through a

### Overcoming 'cycle of fear'

The prospect of dental work does not need to make one feel fearful or anxious. If it does, here are several strategies to help ease your nerves:

- **Communicate with your dentist** - Share your fears and concerns so your dentist can adapt the treatment to your needs.
- **Get distracted** - Watch TV or listen to music if allowed.
- **Talk with your hands** -

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# ) Straighten your smile (

Orthodontics is a specialty in dentistry that focuses on correcting teeth and jaws that are positioned improperly.

Crooked or crowded teeth are harder to keep clean and more susceptible to tooth decay and gum disease.

Speech, phonetics and breathing may also be compromised, and it's not unusual for people with teeth irregularities to refrain from smiling because they are embarrassed.

The good news is there are a wide variety of options - many introduced in the past decade - for orthodontic treatment.

Only a dentist can determine if orthodontic treatment will be beneficial.

Orthodontists and other dentists can develop a treatment plan that's specific to the patient by reviewing medical and dental health history, conducting a clinical exam, and examining X-rays and models of a patient's teeth.

Orthodontists receive two or more years of education beyond their four years in dental school in a Commission on Dental Accreditation-approved orthodontic training program.

Treatment consists of removable or fixed appliances and may involve brackets, bands, wires and/or elastics to provide the necessary movement of your teeth.

Clear removable aligners also can be used to correct mild to moderate orthodontic problems.

## Braces options

• **Metal braces** - Conventional braces have been around for a while because they are effective. Any patient looking to get a straighter smile can be a good candidate for traditional braces.

Luckily, the metal used in this treatment option has become more advanced over the years, so we can offer more lightweight and comfortable options for our patients.

• **Ceramic braces** - This still offers the same effective results as traditional braces; however, it's a little subtler. Since the brackets are made from clear, ceramic plastic they are less noticeable than metal braces.

• **Lingual braces** - The metal (e.g., gold) brackets are actually cemented to the back of the teeth instead of the front, allowing patients to straighten their teeth without anyone knowing.

However, lingual braces aren't suitable for patients with serious bite problems or small teeth.

• **Clear aligners** - Clear, removable aligners, such as Invisalign and ClearConnect, offer a virtually clear way to straighten teeth. These boast comfort, efficiency and discretion.

Patients have no dietary restrictions, as the aligners can be removed, and brushing and flossing isn't affected.

## Other considerations

The ideal time for braces is for children between 7-14 years of age, while their face and mouth are still growing. Many adults are now improving their smiles and correcting minor problems by wearing braces. The American Association of Orthodontists recommends an initial examination at age 7 to help diagnose orthodontic problems that may need to be corrected before all the permanent teeth erupt. At the age of 12, most kids will have their permanent teeth and be ready for orthodontic treatment.

The time required for treatment depends on the complication of the problem. The average time is one to three years followed by wearing a retainer to stabilize the straightened teeth. As one gets older, the same treatment could take longer.

During the treatment, there will be periods of some discomfort as the wires are changed and adjusted to apply the necessary pressure. Extra special care must be taken for cleanings to prevent decay.

Orthodontics are an investment in a patient's appearance and long-term, continual dental health.

To find out what option is right for you, talk with your general dentist or contact an orthodontist in your area.

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vein, so it works quicker. This method allows the dentist to continually adjust the level of sedation.

**Deep sedation and general anesthesia** - Medications make the patient almost unconscious or totally unconscious during the procedure.

Most dentists can administer nitrous oxide or pills and an increasing number of dentists can provide moderate sedation.

However, only a small percentage of dentists administer deep sedation and general anesthesia for more complex procedures.

Talk with your dentist if you have questions about these options.

HELPFUL TIP:



Listening to music may help calm those dental jitters.

"Everyone's fear is different and for some the 'cycle of fear' can be broken simply by having a dentist they trust listen to their unique concerns. For others, it is having really good anesthetic so they don't feel any of the work. Others nitrous oxide is the key. However, for many people, sedation dentistry has been the solution that has finally allowed them to have the smile they've always wanted," Dr. Straub, who has treated more than 400 sedation cases, said.

Dental anxiety and phobia can lead to unnecessary oral health problems, which in turn can lead to much more time spent in the dental chair for treatment.

# Eating disorders and oral health

Regardless of the specific eating disorder a person suffers from, the body is deprived of vitamins, minerals, proteins and other nutrients that are essential for maintaining good health.

**N**early 10 million women and 1 million men in the United States are affected by anorexia or bulimia and millions more suffer from binge-eating disorders, according to the National Eating Disorders Association.

Two of the more common eating disorders are bulimia nervosa and anorexia nervosa.

Regardless of the specific eating disorder a person suffers from, the body is deprived of vitamins, minerals, proteins and other nutrients that are essential for maintaining good health.

Eating disorders can have serious consequences on major organs, muscles and even a person's oral health.

## Warning signs and symptoms

Dentists are often the first line of defense when it comes to recognizing the "tell-tale" signs of eating disorders.

These include:

- Bad breath
- Sensitive teeth
- Tender mouth, throat and salivary glands



- Teeth that are worn and appear almost translucent
- Mouth sores
- Dry mouth
- Cracked, red or dry lips

Many of these symptoms are caused by stomach acids reaching the mouth during frequent vomiting. Acid damages the teeth (especially the inside of the upper front

teeth) and erodes tooth enamel, causing sensitivity, thinning and chipping.

Anorexia sufferers may experience weakening of the jaw bone resulting from osteoporosis which also weakens teeth and can lead to tooth loss.

## Restoring and recovering

Improving one's oral health after recovering from an eating disorder is important to their self-esteem and general well-being.

If you or someone you know has an eating disorder, talk with a health care provider and dentist to find help.

Tooth restoration is not recommended until the person has received treatment to overcome the disorder.

Once recovered, damaged and worn teeth can be restored. Treatment may require dental crowns, veneers or fillings.

Dentists can provide support and make needed recommendations to preserve one's oral health while seeking help for an eating disorder, but they cannot treat the eating disorder.

For more information, visit [www.nationaleatingdisorders.org](http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org).

## Protect your lips this summer

Skin safety is of utmost importance in the summer months, but there is one part of the body often overlooked when it comes to sun protection - the lips.

The skin of the lips is thinner than skin elsewhere on the body.

In addition, our lips don't have natural oil glands which makes them susceptible to sun damage from ultraviolet rays.

UV rays are the most important risk factor when it comes to skin cancer. They are associated with 90 percent of all nonmelanoma skin cancers, according to the Skin Cancer Foundation.

Follow these tips to keep your lips healthy:

### Protect your skin

Use a lip balm to protect lips from harmful UV rays and to moisturize them, thereby preventing chapping.

Select a lip balm with SPF of at least 15 (30 is even better). Reapply it every two hours, since activities such as talking,

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A blue rectangular banner for Town Bank. At the top left is a small house icon. To its right, the text "TOWN BANK" is written in a large, white, serif font. Below that, "WISCONSIN'S BANK FOR BUSINESS®" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom left, the phone number "262-317-6400" and the website "www.townbank.us" are listed in yellow. At the bottom right, there is a logo for "MEMBER FDIC" and another logo for "EQUITY" with a house icon.

A green rectangular banner with a wavy pattern. At the top, there are five social media icons: Facebook (f), Facebook Messenger (fr), Pinterest (P), Twitter (bird), and YouTube (You Tube). Below the icons, the text "GET SOCIAL!" is written in a large, bold, blue, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the text "Be sure to visit [WDA.org](http://WDA.org) online for the latest news on everything dental!" is written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font.



# Happy 70th anniversary, community water fluoridation!

**G**rand Rapids, Mich. became the world's first city to adjust the level of fluoride in its water supply as a public dental health initiative on Jan. 25, 1945.

A year later, Sheboygan became the first city in Wisconsin and the third in the country to fluoridate its municipal drinking water.

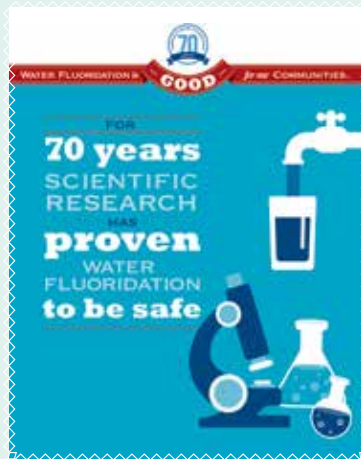
"The oral health of Wisconsin's residents has been substantially improved during the past 70 years by the dental community's persistent efforts in community water fluoridation," Dr. Cliff Hartmann, a pediatric dentist who practices in Greenfield, said.

Almost all water contains some naturally-occurring fluoride, but usually at levels too low to prevent tooth decay. Water fluoridation is the process of adding a small amount of fluoride to public water to a level known to make teeth stronger and prevent cavities.

Today, approximately 90 percent of Wisconsin's population served by public water systems receive the benefit of optimally fluoridated water. This translates into 63 percent of the state's total population receiving fluoridated water.

## Safe, effective and economical

For 70 years, studies have consistently shown that fluoridation



of community water supplies is a safe, effective and economical way to prevent dental decay in both children and adults.

Anyone can benefit from fluoridation's cavity protection, whether at home, work or school, simply by drinking tap water.

That's important, because oral health affects every aspect of our lives – diet, sleep, mental health, social connections, school and work.

Untreated tooth decay can cause pain, school absences, difficulty concentrating, and poor appearance – all contributing to reduced quality of life and ability to succeed.

## New fluoride recommendation

Today, there are more sources of fluoride, such as toothpaste and

mouth rinse, than when fluoridation was first introduced.

With greater availability of fluoride, there has been an increase in cosmetic dental fluorosis.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 90 percent of fluorosis is mild with unnoticeable white spots on the tooth surface.

To provide the benefits of fluoride while reducing the chance for dental fluorosis, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released a final recommendation in April 2015 for the optimal level of fluoride in drinking water.

The new recommendation is for a single level of 0.7 parts per million which replaces the previous recommended range (0.7 ppm - 1.2 ppm) that has been in place since 1962.

The Wisconsin Dental Association supports this recommendation, because it helps ensure a level of fluoride necessary to reduce tooth decay while minimizing the risk of cosmetic fluorosis.

Visit My Water's Fluoride web page at [www.cdc.gov/fluoridation](http://www.cdc.gov/fluoridation) to learn about the fluoride level in your drinking water.

Learn more about the benefits of community water fluoridation - one of the top 10 public health efforts of the 20th century - on WDA.org under the Your Oral Health tab.



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

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.

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drinking and licking your lips can cause it to wear off.

Wear a wide-brimmed hat to help protect your lips and face from the sun.

Don't just apply an SPF lip balm on sunny day - it is important to use it every day, even if its cloudy.

## Stay hydrated

Chronic dehydration leads to dry skin and lips. Consume plenty of fluoridated water and avoid sugary drinks.

Chewing sugar-free gum is also recommended since it aids in the production of saliva which prevents tooth decay.

Look for chewing gum with the American Dental Association Seal of Acceptance because you can be sure it's sugarless.

All gums with the ADA Seal are sweetened by non-cavity causing sweeteners such xylitol. These include Trident Sugarfree Gum, Stride Sugarless Gum, Wrigley's Orbit Sugarfree Gum, Wrigley's Extra Sugarfree Gum and Ice Breakers Ice Cubes Sugarfree.



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