

Oral Wellness Newsletter



C'mon guys, it's time to man up on your oral health. Especially since June is Men's Health Month, 30 days focused on encouraging men to take better care of their bods – including their mouths.

It's a fact, the ladies have an edge when it comes to oral health. Research shows that women go to the dentist twice as often as men – and they have a better record for brushing and flossing.^[1]

“Admit it – we men can be stubborn and don't always like to do what we're told,” said Dan Tison, Oral Wellness Consultant at United Concordia Dental. “But listen up. If you blow off brushing, flossing and regular dentist visits, you're asking for trouble.”

A lackadaisical 'tude towards oral care is likely why more men than women have gum disease. In fact, over half of the male population is diagnosed with gum disease.^[2] “Guys, if your gums are sore and bleed when you brush, you may have it yourself,” Tison suggests. “If you suspect gum disease, don't mess around. Straight-up get to the dentist ASAP.”

If left untreated, gum disease begins to destroy the bone that supports your teeth, and can ultimately lead to tooth loss – not a pretty look. But that's not all. Studies have shown that diseases such as diabetes, heart problems and some cancers are linked to periodontitis, the most serious form of gum disease.^[3]

In honor of Men's Health Month, make an effort to step up your oral health game. Mild gum disease is reversible with the right dental care routine, but periodontitis is permanent.

[Brush up on proper oral care](#)



Dental emergency on the road?

Dental emergencies can happen when you least expect it. If you have an urgent problem while you're traveling for work or on vacation, here are some tips that can help.

Buy ortho wax at the drug store – If you chip a tooth, the sharp broken edges can cut inside your mouth. Cover the spot with a bit of orthodontic wax or tooth wax to protect your skin until you can get it repaired.

Carry over-the-counter pain relievers – Keep ibuprofen, acetaminophen or naproxen in your purse, glove box or luggage. These NSAIDs can temporarily reduce pain and swelling due to toothaches or other issues.

Schedule a virtual dentist visit – Some United Concordia plans cover teledentistry, where you chat live with a dentist by video or phone. The dentist will evaluate a picture or video of your issue and recommend what to do next. Though some things can be treated over the phone, you may be advised to get in to see a nearby dentist.

Find in-network dentists near you – If you have a serious problem and can't wait to get home to your regular dentist, pull up our online **Find a Dentist** tool. Use it to find in-network dentists almost anywhere who accept your United Concordia insurance.

Get our app for on-the-go info – Download the United Concordia Dental app, and log in with the username and password from your **MyDentalBenefits** account. You can pull up your digital member ID card, plus access all your dental plan details 24/7.

[Find a dentist now](#)



Healthy picnic picks

June is prime grilling time, filled with backyard barbecues and your favorite picnic foods. But think before you bite – some of those yummy summer dishes contain ingredients that can help - or hinder - your oral health.

🗨️ **Barbecue sauce** – The sugar and vinegar in many barbecue sauces can damage the enamel on your teeth. If you just can't resist those ribs, make sure to brush or rinse with water after you eat.

🗨️ **Pickled veggies** – Acidic vinegar is what gives pickles their zesty tang. It's also what can erode the protective enamel from your teeth. So try to enjoy these in moderation and rinse afterwards.

🗨️ **Juice and soda** – Sodas and fruit juices are packed with sugar. Even diet sodas are highly acidic and can damage your enamel. Reach for water, or limit yourself to one sweet drink.

👍 **Fresh fruits and veggies** – Crunchy carrots and celery are like natural toothbrushes. So pile your plate high with picks from the veggie platter, plus the salad bowl.

👍 **Cheese and other dairy** – Calcium and vitamin D help build strong teeth and bones. Don't be shy when loading up that cheeseburger or enjoying [garlicky Greek yogurt dip](#).

👍 **Infused water** – Add cubed watermelon and a sprig of mint to infuse flavor into a pitcher of water. It's thirst quenching, hydrating and adds colorful punch to your picnic table.



Garlicky Greek Yogurt Dip

Serves 10

Serve this delish dip dolloped on grilled meat, fish or even as a sandwich topping. Or pair it with your favorite veggies.

Ingredients:

8 oz. fat-free Greek yogurt
1½ grated, unpeeled English cucumber, drained and patted dry
2 tbsps. grated sweet onion
1 tbsp. snipped fresh dillweed
1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
2 tsp. chopped fresh mint
2 tsp. honey
2 large garlic cloves, minced
1 tsp. extra virgin olive oil
½ tsp. crumbled dried oregano
⅛ tsp. salt

Directions:

In a medium bowl, stir together all the ingredients. Serve immediately or cover and refrigerate for up to 24 hours.

Nutrition Per Serving

Calories 23 | Total Fat .5g | Cholesterol 0mg | Sodium 38mg | Carbs 3g | Protein 2g

Brought to you by the [American Heart Association](#)



Healthy hydration

According to the American Dental Association, sipping water is one of the best things you can do for your teeth – especially if its fluoridated.^[4]

Staying hydrated also helps your system distribute nutrients, gets rid of waste, gives your skin a healthy glow and keeps your muscles moving.

Rethink sports drinks

Though it's tempting to reach for your favorite caffeinated, energy-boosting bottle-full, don't. Most sports drinks are heavy on sugar and acid, both big no-no's for your teeth.

And if you're looking to replenish electrolytes post workout, grab a banana or nosh on a spinach salad instead. Your mouth – and your waistline – will thank you.

This summer, watch for signs of dehydration:

- Dry mouth
- Dark-colored urine
- Fast heartbeat
- Headache
- Tiredness

[Learn the best \(and worst\) drinks for your teeth](#)
