

UNITED CONCORDIA® DENTAL
Protecting More Than Just Your Smile®

February 2020

Oral Wellness Newsletter

Hello from United Concordia Dental! This February, we're celebrating Children's Dental Health Month and American Heart Month with timely content you can share. Forward the whole newsletter. Or highlight a few selected articles, then copy and paste them wherever you like. Enjoy!



When to start dental care for kids

As adults, we know that good daily oral care helps keep our mouth and teeth healthy. But when it comes to kids, it's up to us to teach them good oral hygiene habits starting at a young age. Even babies can benefit from a regular oral care routine.

As you might expect, the type of care - and how much kids can do on their own - varies by age. And you'd be surprised to know how early your child should start seeing the dentist! Learn the recommended oral care for your children, from before baby's first tooth even comes in to young teenagers.

[View the children's dental timeline](#)



Baby those baby teeth

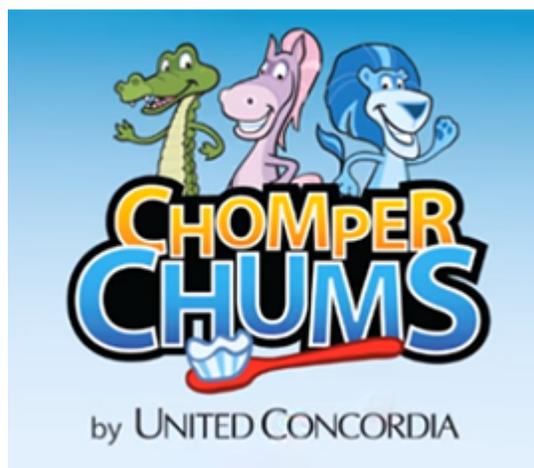
They're not just trade-ins for Tooth Fairy cash - baby teeth play an important role in normal facial development, plus chewing and talking. They also guide permanent teeth, helping them break through gums in the right spots.

Losing baby teeth too early can cause many issues, so make sure to take care of them. Gently clean your child's teeth twice a day using a soft toothbrush or finger brush. This will help to prevent cavities, the most common dental disease in children.

Early cavities don't always have symptoms you can see, but your child's dentist and hygienist are experts at detecting them. If left untreated, cavities can become so severe that teeth have to be capped or removed. The good news is, cavities are largely preventable with proper oral care and regular dental visits. And remember, sugary drinks can lead to cavities, so never send baby to bed with anything other than water!

United Concordia offers a valuable resource to help you ensure a lifetime of healthy smiles for your child. Learn about baby-friendly brushing, cavity warning signs, baby's first trip to the dentist and more in this sweet children's book.

[Read our Baby Book of Oral Health](#)



Got kids? Get our Chomper Chums® app!

No more nagging - children love brushing with their favorite Chomper Chum. First they choose a brushing buddy from our cast of loveable characters. Each time they brush, they earn points to buy healthy treats for their friend.

With Chomper Chums, your kids can:

- Set the 2-minute timer
- Brush alongside their buddy
- Practice the right way to brush, rinse and floss
- Learn healthy eating habits

Download the app on Google Play or in the Apple App Store.

[Watch the Chomper Chums video](#)

Heart disease and your oral health

Though gum disease doesn't cause heart disease and vice versa, they're thought to be linked. Serious gum disease appears to make blood pressure worse and can interfere with hypertension treatment.*

Mild gum disease, or gingivitis, is a common condition where the bacteria in plaque cause swelling, redness and bleeding. If you have gingivitis, your dentist can help you reverse it with early treatment.

But if you ignore it, gingivitis can progress to periodontitis, a serious infection that can destroy the tissue and bone that hold your teeth in place. The infection may also get into your bloodstream and travel through your whole body – including your heart.

Some United Concordia plans include extra coverage to make it more affordable to get the gum disease treatment you need. Our Smile for Health® - Wellness program provides additional periodontal services for people with heart disease and other medical conditions. Find out if you're eligible through your dental plan.

[Check for Smile for Health – Wellness coverage](#)

Get cookin' on a healthier heart

According to the Centers for Disease Control, almost half of Americans have at least one risk factor for heart disease: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, smoking and diabetes. You may not be able to control some risk factors, but adopting a heart-healthy diet is totally in your power. Here are a few tips: eat more fruits and veggies, choose whole grains and low-fat proteins, and reduce your sodium intake. Since February is American Heart month, it's the perfect time to dig into a delish dish that's good for your ticker, too.



[Get the recipe](#)

Seared Chicken with Strawberry Salsa

Serves 4

Ingredients:

Chicken

½ tsp. paprika

¼ tsp. ground allspice OR ground cumin

¼ tsp. each salt and pepper

4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves, (about 4 oz. each), all visible fat removed

Salsa

1 cup diced, hulled strawberries
1 medium poblano pepper (seeds and ribs removed, diced)
½ cup finely chopped red onion
¼ cup chopped fresh mint OR cilantro
2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
1 tbsp. sugar
1/8 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
2 tsp. canola or corn oil

Directions:

Mix the paprika, allspice or cumin, salt and pepper. Sprinkle over chicken. Let stand for 10 minutes.

In a medium bowl, stir together salsa ingredients.

In a large skillet, heat the oil over medium-high heat, swirling to coat the bottom. Cook chicken with the smooth side down for 4 minutes. Flip and cook for 2-4 minutes, or until no longer pink in the center. Spoon the salsa over the chicken.

Nutrition info per serving

200 calories | 25g protein | 1g fiber

Source: American Heart Association; Diabetes & Heart Healthy Cookbook, 2nd Edition



Save money on college

Are you stressed out over how you're going to pay for college? At United Concordia, we care as much about your mental well-being as your oral well-being. That's why many of our dental plans include the College Tuition Benefit®, a program that helps you save up for college.

The College Tuition Benefit works similar to a frequent flier program. Each year you're covered by an eligible United Concordia Dental plan, you earn Tuition Rewards® points. One point equals one dollar, so the more points you earn, the more discounts you earn. Points can be redeemed to help cover tuition costs at more than 400 participating private colleges and universities nationwide.

To see if your plan includes the College Tuition Benefit, [log into your MyDentalBenefits account](#).

[Learn more about Tuition Rewards](#)

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* [Dental health and heart health](#): America Heart Association; December 2013



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