

May 2020

## Oral Wellness Newsletter

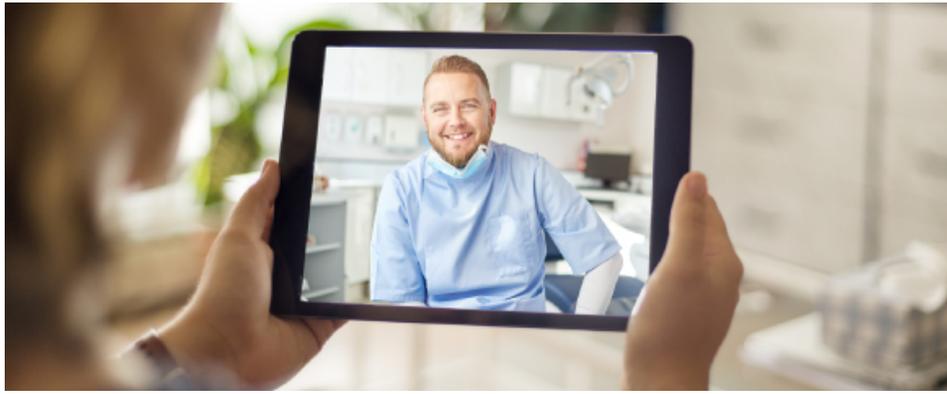
*Hello colleagues, in our May issue, we're sharing important COVID-19-related content designed to help members keep their mouths healthy, even though they're distanced from their dentists. Forward the whole newsletter. Or highlight a few selected articles, then copy and paste them wherever you like.*



### 7 Ways to stay healthy and connected during COVID-19

As each of us adapts to this new normal of working-from-home and distancing from one another, it's important you pay attention to your physical and mental health. Ericka Cauthon, a United Concordia Dental oral wellness consultant, offers 7 ways to ensure you're positioning yourself for overall wellness.

- 1. Quarantine the news.** While staying informed 24/7 may be the norm, setting daily time limits on news exposure can help protect your mental and emotional health.
- 2. Call people.** Hearing another person's voice offers a human connection. Try scheduling a virtual coffee break with fellow employees, or FaceTime/visual chat with friends and family after work.
- 3. Exercise.** Even though your gym may be off limits, there are a host of live-streamed and recorded digital classes for at-home options.
- 4. Eat right.** Nutrition is an excellent path to wellness. A healthy diet is not only good for your mouth and waistline, it can also positively impact mood and help prevent illness.
- 5. Sleep.** Whether your working hours have changed or not, make sure sleep is an essential part of your routine. Being well rested can also boost your immune system.
- 6. Know your work-from-home (WFH) weaknesses.** To help stay motivated and healthy, stick to your normal morning routine. A recent study showed only 60% of WFH employees brushed their teeth before work. Letting your oral hygiene suffer could increase your risk of cavities and gum disease.
- 7. Reframe the meaning of social distancing.** While social distancing is key to reducing the spread of COVID-19, it can cause loneliness by restricting our basic need to connect. Think of it as 'physical distancing' – a collective action that protects you and others; a true symbol of solidarity and togetherness.



## **Teledentistry visits for urgent dental care**

Dental emergencies can happen when you least expect it. If you have an urgent problem or emergency during COVID-19, you can seek care from the safety of home. Because teledentistry - or virtual dental visits - are covered by your United Concordia Dental plan.

Typically during a teledentistry visit, you and the dentist have a two-way conversation via video conference or phone. You'll share a high-quality photo or video of your problem with the dentist, who will evaluate your condition and advise what to do next. Though some conditions can be treated over the phone, you may be advised to see a dentist who's open for emergency care.

Download our flyer that explains when you should seek urgent or emergency care, and which social media apps can be used to conduct virtual dental visits.

[Learn about your teledentistry coverage](#)



## **Social distance your toothbrush if you're sick**

The coronavirus is thought to spread when infected people sneeze or cough, and possibly by touching contaminated surfaces.<sup>[1]</sup> It may also be found in a person's saliva.<sup>[2]</sup> So when you're sick and you brush your teeth, germs end up on your toothbrush. And if it's stored in a shared toothbrush holder, germs can spread to other people in your household.

Not everyone who has COVID-19 shows symptoms, so it's important to practice proper toothbrush hygiene even if you think you're fine. Be extra careful if you have family members who are at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19, such as older adults and people with serious underlying medical conditions.

Here are tips to help keep your family healthy, whether you have a cold, the flu, and especially if you contract COVID-19.

[Get toothbrush safety tips](#)



## Practice dental distancing, too

Social distancing is keeping us apart from friends and loved ones. Unfortunately, because of the coronavirus, we're also distanced from our regular dentists and the expert oral care they provide.

Most dental offices are closed due to COVID-19, and dentists have been asked to only see patients who need urgent or emergency care. That's why it's especially important to practice good oral hygiene during quarantine to keep your mouth healthy and avoid spreading germs.

We've compiled helpful tips to keep germs and oral problems at a distance, until you can get back into the exam chair.

[Download the infographic](#)



## Brush up on your brushing technique

Years ago, someone probably nagged you about the importance of good oral habits. Well, now is the time to thank them. Why? Because a growing body of evidence suggests that the health of the mouth and body are connected. So much so that gum disease may be linked to serious conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and stroke.<sup>[3]</sup>

While you're on hiatus from visiting the dentist, don't slack off on your oral hygiene routine. The American Dental Association recommends brushing twice a day and flossing once.

While you're probably a pro at taking care of your mouth, it never hurts to brush up on oral health basics. Check out these refreshers to keep on smiling.

[Brushing and flossing 101](#)



## Avocado, Black Bean and Corn Salsa

Craving a something crunchy while you're binge-watching all those TV shows? Grab some chips and dip into this colorful salsa made with tasty, protein-rich ingredients. It's also yummy topped on your favorite salad greens or served as a side dish with fajitas or tacos.

You don't have to feel guilty snacking on this healthy salsa. Avocados are packed with nearly 20 vitamins and minerals, including potassium and B vitamins, which help fight off disease and infection. They also contain heart-healthy monounsaturated fat – that's the good fat! And black beans are loaded with folate, potassium, protein and fiber, which can help decrease your risk of many chronic diseases and help you stay fuller longer.

### [Get the recipe](#)

#### *Ingredients:*

- 2 large ripe avocados, peeled and pitted
- ¼ cup vinaigrette salad dressing
- ¼ cup scallions, sliced
- 1 (15-oz.) can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup fresh (or thawed and drained frozen) corn kernels
- ½ cup red bell pepper, diced

#### **Directions:**

Cut avocados into ½ inch cubes. In a large bowl, whisk together salad dressing and scallions. Stir in beans, corn and red pepper. Add avocados and toss gently. To store, lightly press a piece of plastic wrap directly onto the surface of the salsa and refrigerate.

#### *Nutrition per serving (1/2 cup)*

150 calories | 4g protein | 6g fiber

Recipe brought to you by the Hass Avocado Board.  
Heart-Check Certified by the American Heart Association.

---

### [Lea en Español](#)

### [Download the pdf](#)

---

[1] [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#); cdc.gov; March 2020.

[2] [Consistent Detection of 2019 Novel Coronavirus in Saliva](#); Oxford University Press; February 2020.

[3] [Healthy mouth, healthy body](#); American Dental Association; 2006.



*Stay Connected. Stay Healthy.*

**Ensure delivery of emails**

Please add [noreply@email-unitedconcordia.com](mailto:noreply@email-unitedconcordia.com) to your email address book or safe list.

OWC\_20200428\_Monthly\_May