

## Oral Wellness Newsletter



Gearing up for those masked rascals? Before you stock up in the candy aisle this Halloween, consider an alternative treat that's fun and dentist approved! Here are some ideas that will delight the neighborhood kids (and their parents, too).

- **Play dough** - Get creative with small play dough containers in orange, black, green and purple. Add in creepy surprises like spiders or plastic eyeballs.
- **Temporary tattoos** - Kids LOVE these stick-on, wash-off decorations! Look for zombie bites, monsters, bugs and bats.
- **Glow sticks** - Find packs of glow sticks at the dollar store. They're super-fun, plus they help keep kids safe when running around after dark.

[Get 6 more treat ideas that aren't candy](#)

### Breast cancer and your oral health

Gum disease is [linked](#) to an increased risk of breast cancer. And many breast cancer survivors experience dental problems due to [side effects](#) from treatment. Since October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, we're sharing information to help everyone who has been diag-

nosed to take care of their mouths during treatment. We've collected breast cancer and oral health resources and tips. Plus, a guide for talking to your dentist if you're experiencing oral issues. Use this information yourself or pass it on to someone you love.

### [Breast cancer resources for dental health](#)



### [Dealing with sleep apnea](#)

Do you snore, choke or gasp loudly while sleeping? Wake up feeling tired and cranky? You may have sleep apnea, a common disorder in which breathing stops and starts during the night. Sleep apnea can be mild to moderate or severe, depending on how many times breathing stops.

When your breathing stops and you don't get enough air, the oxygen level in your blood drops. The sudden drop in blood oxygen can increase your blood pressure and strain your heart. So having sleep apnea can [raise your risk](#) of high blood pressure, heart attack and stroke. It may also increase your risk of type 2 diabetes.

If your doctor thinks you have sleep apnea, you may be referred to an ear, nose and throat specialist for testing. If you're diagnosed with sleep apnea, treatment varies depending on the grade. Moderate to severe sleep apnea is typically treated by using a continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machine.

With CPAP therapy, you wear a mask over your nose and mouth, which delivers the air you need to breathe correctly. But sometimes, the air pressure from your CPAP can cause dry mouth and other oral issues.

In some cases, mild to moderate sleep apnea can be treated with a mandibular advancement device (MAD). A MAD adjusts your jaw and tongue to help keep your airway open. But these devices can also cause joint pain. Your dentist can recommend ways to treat dry mouth and other oral side effects of sleep apnea treatment.

### [Learn what side effects to watch for](#)



## Up your flossing game

Meet Holley Kirkland, RDH, United Concordia Dental's on-staff dental hygienist. Holley does more than just polish pearly whites. She's an oral wellness expert here to teach you how a healthy mouth can lead to a healthy body – and a healthier life.

This October, during Dental Hygiene Month, Holley has a challenge for you – up your flossing game to boost your oral wellness.

### Take the United Concordia Flossing Challenge

Are you flossing at least once a day? The American Dental Association recommends brushing twice a day and cleaning between teeth once a day using floss or another interdental cleaner.

If you've been slacking off, you're not alone. [Almost 60%](#) of people don't floss at all!

This month, we're challenging you to share your flossing journey with us on social media and tag your friends to encourage them to floss.

**Follow** United Concordia Dental on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and/or [Twitter](#), **tag us** in your flossing posts, **challenge** a friend and include the hashtag **#flossingchallenge2022**.

We can't wait to see your healthy smiles!

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