

January 2023

Oral Wellness Newsletter



Make flossing your New Year's resolution

Consider making flossing your New Year's resolution. Whether you're a pro or still trying to set a routine, the American Dental Association recommends flossing at least once a day for good oral health.

If you don't like using regular dental floss, consider using a flossing alternative such as a water flosser or floss pick.

Make flossing a part of your everyday dental hygiene routine in 2023. To help you stay focused, check out these [flossing tips and tricks](#).

— JANUARY —
GLAUCOMA
AWARENESS MONTH



Don't let glaucoma steal your sight!

Did you know that glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness in the United States for people over the age of 60? During Glaucoma Awareness Month in January, there are several precautions you can take to protect your eyes against vision loss caused by this group of eye diseases.

Glaucoma, which involves a set of conditions that result in damage to your eye's optic nerve, has very few warning signs and often occurs at a gradual rate, leaving patients unaware of any harm. Your optometrist can catch glaucoma in the early stages by looking inside your eyes – making them the best defense against developing glaucoma-related blindness. Get a dilated eye exam in the new year and reduce the risk for glaucoma!

If it's been a while since visiting the eye doctor, you can walk through a [virtual eye visit](#) to learn what to expect!



Why your mouth will thank you during "Dry January"

Giving up alcohol during "Dry January" is a popular short-term resolution that comes with plenty of oral health perks.

There are many benefits – for your mouth and your body – if you decide to make this resolution your own, including:

- **A lower risk of oral cancer**
 - Research shows that drinking alcohol increases your chances of getting mouth cancer. Reducing alcohol consumption after completing this challenge can help make a difference for the health of your mouth.
- **More hydration**
 - Alcohol dehydrates the body by causing the kidneys to expel more water than it normally would. If you'd like to enjoy a cocktail, consider sipping water in between drinks to replenish the saliva in your mouth.
- **Lower sugar intake**
 - Alcohol metabolizes into sugar, which attracts bacteria and can lead to tooth decay. Be sure to floss, brush and rinse with mouthwash after drinking.

Alcohol isn't the only beverage that can harm our oral wellness. [Learn more about these other drinks and the healthy options you can choose in 2023.](#)



Help prevent HPV of the mouth and throat

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the United States. HPV can occur in several areas, including the mouth and throat. Most infections aren't harmful and go away on their own; however, if left untreated, HPV can lead to more severe health issues, such as cancer in the back of your mouth and throat.

During Cervical Health Awareness month, take time to educate yourself about the risk factors, symptoms and ways to prevent cancer caused by HPV.

[Protect yourself from the dangers of HPV.](#)

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Take Your Two-Minute My Dental Assessment

This quick quiz rates the health of your mouth.

Share the results with your dentist.

Learn how your lifestyle and any medical conditions may be affecting your oral health. Print out a report to discuss with your dentist at your next visit.

Managing your dental benefits just got easier

Our updated *MyDentalBenefits* online platform now makes it easy to:

- See what your plan covers and how much we'll pay
- Estimate your costs before getting dental care
- Check the status of dental claims
- Find in-network dentists near you
- Chat live or upgrade to a phone call with customer service

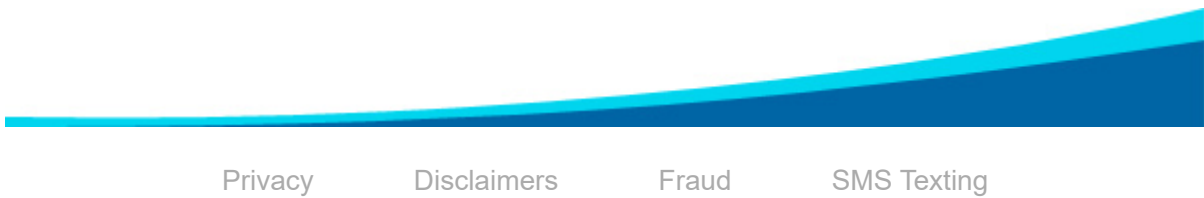
- Print extra ID cards
- Rate your oral health with the My Dental Assessment quiz
- Opt in to get paperless Explanation of Benefits (EOBs)

MyDentalBenefits offers 24/7 access to a wide variety of information and tools – from your plan summary to explanation of benefits, in-network dentist search to oral wellness tips!

Creating an account is a step in the right direction when it comes taking care of your total health. You can also complete your [My Dental Assessment](#) annually and share the results with your dentist and primary care physician. It only takes two minutes to do and will give you valuable insight that can help your dentist and doctor begin to bridge any gaps in your care.

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