

# Benefits Spotlight

News for *You*. News to *Share* with your Employees.

## Get the Most from Your Dental Benefits in the New Year

The day-to-day life of Iowans in 2020 has been shaped by COVID-19. Everything from incorporating a mask into your wardrobe to where you're working or going to school to whether you've been able to go to your preventive dentist visits has been impacted by the pandemic.

But the pandemic doesn't have to keep you from maintaining your oral health and taking full advantage of your dental benefits. Start the year on a high note by taking advantage of your dental benefits — schedule an appointment to see your dentist today.

### How COVID-19 Threw Patients Off Their Regular Dental Schedule

When the pandemic first emerged in the United States in the late winter of 2020, the Iowa Dental Association (IDA) issued guidance recommending that dentists only perform emergency and medically necessary dental procedures. To keep both dental staff and patients safe, that meant that all preventive visits had to be put on hold.

Was one of your dental appointments canceled as a result of COVID-19? Have you rescheduled? If you haven't, you could be leaving benefits on the table.

### What You Can Do Now

As 2021 unfolds, COVID-19 is still part of our daily lives in Iowa and everywhere. But as the pandemic has evolved, knowledge on how to protect patients has as well. The ADA has provided recommendations on how dentists can safely operate, so patients are now able to get their important preventive dental care.

Right now is the perfect time to make an appointment with your dentist. The unique circumstances of this past year means your dentist likely has more openings since many patients have gotten off their regular schedules with COVID-19 shut downs. Call your dentist to get scheduled today.

## What You Can Do Moving Forward: Tips for Making the Most of Your Plan

Here are some tips you can put into place to ensure you're using your dental insurance to the fullest:

- Don't leave the dentist's office without scheduling your next appointment. Most Delta Dental of Iowa insurance plans cover 100% of two preventive exams annually, so scheduling each exam 6 months apart will ensure you're taking full advantage of this important benefit.
- Keep communication lines open with your dentist. At each appointment, ask your dentist about any treatments he or she suggests that might be completed within the coverage year. This will help you plan and understand your benefits usage.
- Once you understand the treatments you'll need, you can work with your Delta Dental of Iowa to understand your out-of-pocket costs and strategize the best approach to make the most of your insurance coverage.

### Want to Know How Your Benefits Usage Stands? Contact Us.

Being savvy with your benefits isn't always easy, but that's why Delta Dental of Iowa's Customer Service department is here. Log in to your Member Connection to learn more about your plan's benefits or give our team a call at the number on the back of your Delta Dental of Iowa I.D. card. We'll break down the nuts and bolts of your plan to ensure you're getting the most out of it.

#### SOURCE:

<https://success.ada.org/en/practice-management/patients/infectious-diseases-2019-novel-coronavirus>

## The Skinny on Juice Cleanses for Oral Health

We've all been there: You wake up on January 1, and you know you overdid it throughout the holiday season. You feel bloated and heavy, and you need a quick fix. Enter the juice cleanse, which claims to pack lots of nutrients, boost your energy, cut your calorie count and shed pounds fast. But before you take your first sip, you should consider how this type of diet affects your oral health.

### Why People Turn to Juice Cleanses

Juice cleanses are intended to temporarily replace your typical solid food diet. The concept is that the produce-filled juices rapidly rid your body of toxins, like bacteria from unhealthy foods and drinks. When your body has a build-up of these toxins, you tend to feel it in the form of headaches, bloat, pain and fatigue.

Juice cleanses are not intended to be used as a sustainable lifestyle. Rather, they should be used for a short period of time — typically a few days. People who support juice cleanses say that the concentrated nutrients from fruit and vegetable juices encourage your body to remove toxins quicker. As a result, you feel more energized, have a lower appetite and lose weight.

## What Health Experts Think

So, are juice cleanses the miracle quick fix your body needs to recharge and undo damage? Health and nutrition experts say no.

The medical community largely does not support the practice of juice cleansing because there's no research that points to the claims that juice cleansing boosts toxin removal and better health.

It's important to understand that juice cleansing isn't selective about what it eliminates. In other words, it doesn't just remove bad things like toxins from your body, it also removes good nutrients as well. When your body is "shocked" into flushing out a lot of nutrients, you may experience blood sugar spikes and drops, low blood pressure, lack of concentration and tiredness.

## How Juice Cleanses Affect Your Teeth and Mouth

Dentists agree: Juice cleanses are not good for your dental health. Although fruits have many health benefits, they are high in natural sugar. Juice cleanses contain a lot of sugar, and the bacteria in your mouth that cause tooth decay love feeding on that sugar.

Juice cleanses are designed to replace your regular diet, so you'll be drinking juices regularly throughout the day. That means a lot of sugar. And if even the sugars are naturally occurring, they can still be harmful to your teeth.

In addition to feeding cavity-causing bacteria, some types of fruit, particularly citrus fruits like oranges and lemons, can damage your teeth enamel. When your enamel wears down, you may experience tooth sensitivity, which can cause a lot of pain.

If you're looking to undo some holiday damage, the best way is to focus on a balanced diet filled with whole foods and plenty of water. You won't see results in just a few days, but it won't take long for you to feel the positive effects. Plus, you'll enjoy the satisfaction of long-term results that don't compromise your overall or oral health.