

# grin!®

news, notes &  
entertainment to  
keep your smile  
healthy & happy

back-to-  
school  
2017  
volume 6, issue 2

walk in the shoes of  
a dental student

**HOW TO FIND A DENTIST WHEN  
YOU MOVE AWAY  
FROM HOME**

your back-to-school  
smile list

**5** healthy ways to  
think outside  
the (lunch) box







*/ A smile can say*  
**I CAN'T REPEAT IT  
BUT IT'S GOOD**

Every smile tells a story. And each one can say something powerful. As the nation's leading dental benefits provider, Delta Dental makes it easy to protect your smile and keep it healthy with the largest network of dentists nationwide, quick answers and personalized service. [Learn more at DeltaDental.com.](https://www.DeltaDental.com)

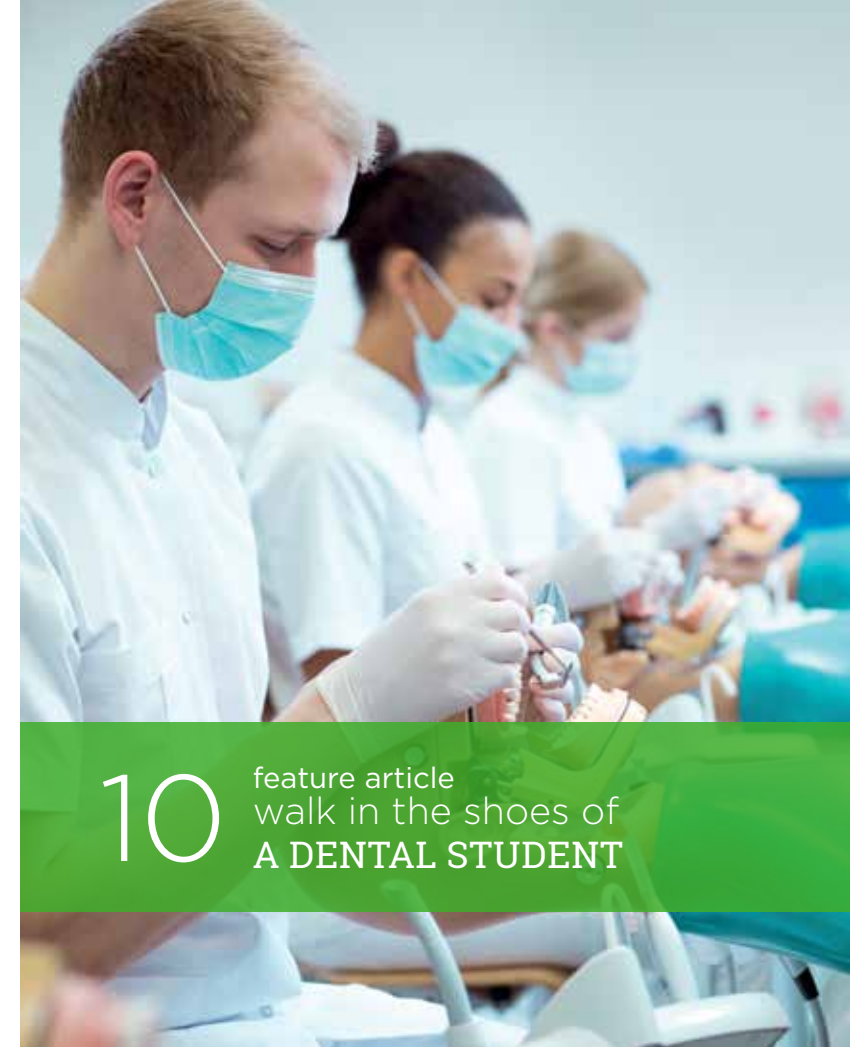


smile power™

# grin!®

## table of contents

- 4 on topic with dr. kohn:**  
dental school memories
- 5 mouth-friendly recipe:**  
strawberry energy bites
- 6 history of oral health:**  
dental education
- 7 readers ask, we answer:**  
whether or not to remove wisdom teeth
- 8 5 healthy ways to think outside the (lunch) box**
- 9 two-word answers**
- 14 dental benefits education:**  
how to read an explanation of benefits
- 15 dental trend spotlight:**  
therapy dogs in dental offices
- 16 your back-to-school smile list:**  
10 to-do's that will make you grin

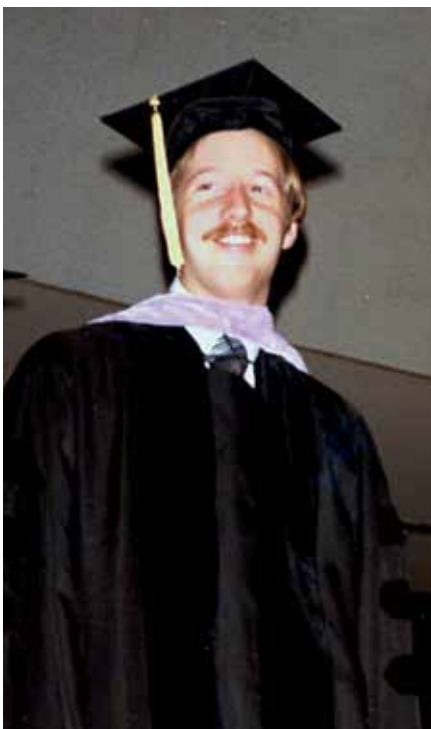


**10** feature article  
**walk in the shoes of  
A DENTAL STUDENT**



**12** feature article  
**HOW TO FIND A DENTIST WHEN  
YOU MOVE AWAY FROM HOME**





## on topic with dr. kohn

### dental school memories

My favorite part of dental school, of course, was walking across the stage in cap and gown, receiving my diploma, and hearing the dental school dean say, "Congratulations, doctor!" as he shook my hand!

Seriously, it is a difficult and stressful four years, but I remember the fun and shared experiences I had with my classmates – people who were also trying to survive and become knowledgeable, successful clinicians.

I think my main memory is my first patients. After 40 years, I still remember most of their names. I remember the feeling of tremendous responsibility, that someone was trusting *me* to take care of them. There is a certain vulnerability you feel when you are worried about any aspect of your health, and you put your faith and trust in someone to know what they are doing and to do the right thing for you. I always tried to put myself in my patients' shoes and do for them what I would want done for my family or myself. It also made me want to become as knowledgeable as possible about all aspects of my profession.

**So, my favorite part of dentistry from dental school to today is the people I get to interact with every day – and, hopefully, I help make their days or lives a little better.**

*Meet Delta Dental's Vice President of Dental Science and Policy, Bill Kohn, DDS. Formerly the director of the Division of Oral Health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Kohn has timely tips and valuable insights to share as our resident dental expert.*



mouth-  
friendly  
RECIPE

## strawberry energy bites

*Cookies and fruit snacks may be lunchbox and after-school favorites, but they're not so sweet for teeth. These strawberry energy bites are unique treats that deliver a dose of vitamin C, which helps the body repair bones and teeth.*

### ingredients:

1 cup frozen strawberries  
1 cup oats  
1/2 cup sunflower seeds  
1/2 cup coconut flour  
1-2 tablespoons coconut oil  
Unsweetened, shredded coconut

### directions:

- 1 Blend strawberries, oats, sunflower seeds, coconut flour and 1 tablespoon of the coconut oil in a food processor. You can also add a pinch of sugar substitute if you prefer a sweeter taste.
- 2 When the mixture becomes a fine paste, form into balls. You may need to add another tablespoon of coconut oil if the mixture seems too dry.
- 3 Roll the balls in the shredded coconut, then refrigerate for at least 2 hours before enjoying.
- 4 Store them in the fridge for up to 3 days, or put them in the freezer for future use.



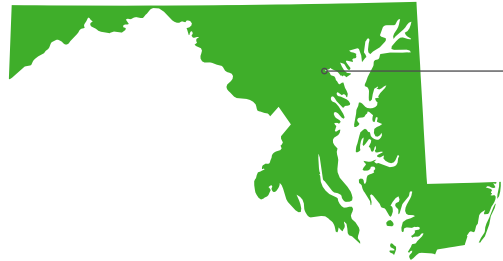
# HISTORY OF ORAL HEALTH: dental education

Dental education has come a long way since barbers were trained to perform tooth extractions. Here's a look at how far it has advanced.



1210

The Guild of Barbers forms in France. Barbers were split into two groups: educated surgeons who could perform operations and lay barbers who could perform routine tasks such as tooth extractions – and shaving.



1840

The first dental school in the world, the University of Maryland School of Dentistry, opens in Baltimore.

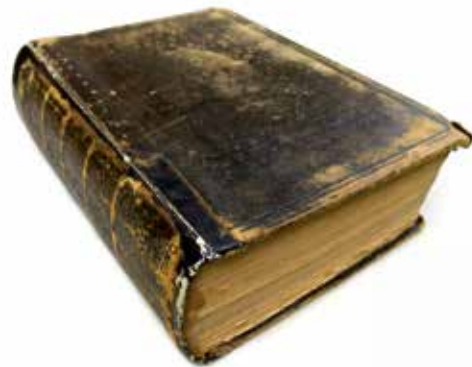


1948

The National Institute of Dental Research (known today as the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research) is founded by Congress.

1530

The first book dedicated to dentistry, *The Little Medicinal Book for All Kinds of Diseases and Infirmities of the Teeth*, is published in Germany.



1913

The first *Journal of the American Dental Association* is published.

1959

The first comprehensive book on dental hygiene, *Clinical Practice of the Dental Hygienist*, is published by dentist and dental hygienist Esther Wilkins. The updated textbook is still used to teach dental hygiene courses today.



## readers ask, we answer

Lee Ann asks:

**“My daughter’s wisdom teeth are coming in, but they don’t seem to be bothering her at all. Does she really need to have them removed?”**

Hi, Lee Ann. Between the ages of 17 and 21, most people get a third set of molars, also known as wisdom teeth. In some situations there may not be enough room for the teeth and they may not be able to fully erupt, or push past the gums. When wisdom teeth are impacted (stuck completely or partially below the gums), they may lead to future oral health issues such as tooth decay and gum disease.

Though it’s generally agreed that wisdom teeth should be removed if they are causing problems, such as infection, frequent pain, damage to adjacent teeth or other immediate difficulties, dentists debate about what to do when they *aren’t* causing issues. In an effort to prevent problems before they start, dentists may recommend wisdom teeth removal even before they cause any issues.

The recommendations of the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons support removal of wisdom teeth “with disease or at a high risk of developing disease,” so teeth that are currently a problem or very likely to be a problem should be taken care of sooner rather than later. However, they go on to state, “In the absence of disease or significant risk of disease, active clinical and radiographic surveillance is indicated.” Waiting to see how the teeth develop may result in less surgical trauma if extractions are eventually needed, or the teeth may never need to be removed at all. In either case, the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons recommends making a decision by age 25 or 26, so there is usually ample time to monitor and evaluate.

**The bottom line:** Your daughter may not necessarily need to have her wisdom teeth removed. Talk with her dentist to get an expert opinion on how your daughter’s teeth are developing and whether removing her wisdom teeth is recommended at this time. With most young adults, there usually is very little risk in waiting to see how things develop.



Have a question you’d like us to answer? Send it to [grin@deltadental.com](mailto:grin@deltadental.com), and it could be featured in an upcoming issue.



# 5 HEALTHY WAYS TO THINK outside the (lunch) box

Don't get stuck in a PB&J rut when you're prepping lunches for school or the office. These five alternatives are delicious and mouth-friendly.



1

### Egg and avocado salad sandwich

Egg yolks provide vitamin D, which helps your body absorb calcium needed to build strong teeth. And researchers at The Ohio State University have found that nutrients in avocados can halt the development of oral cancer cells.



2

### Almond coconut bars

Almonds are a good source of protein, which helps you feel full and may prevent non-nutritious snacking. They're also a good source of calcium.



3

### Ground turkey and veggie lettuce wraps

Turkey is rich in phosphorus, which works with calcium to build strong teeth. Vegetables such as red peppers and carrots contain vitamin C, which helps promote healthy gums.



4

### Apple slices with almond butter

Apples are high in fiber - eating them produces saliva, which helps rinse food particles out of your mouth. Add some dark chocolate chips for antioxidants that help prevent mouth bacteria from turning into tooth-damaging acids.



5

### Spinach salad with strawberries and feta

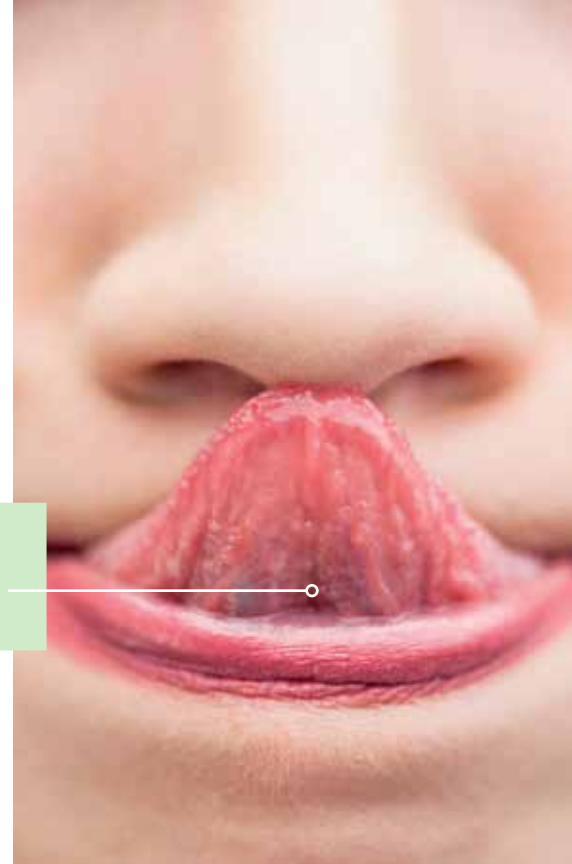
Spinach is high in beta-carotene, which is essential for strong tooth enamel in developing teeth. Strawberries are packed with vitamin C. In addition to providing calcium, cheese may also help raise the pH levels in your mouth, lowering the risk of tooth decay.

## TWO-WORD answers

**Q:** What's the thing called that attaches the tongue to the floor of your mouth?

**A:** Lingual frenulum.

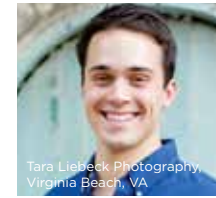
A frenulum is a small fold of tissue in the body. "Lingual" specifies that the tissue relates to the tongue.





# walk in the shoes of A DENTAL STUDENT

*Dentists are among the top 10 most trusted professionals in the United States, and it's no wonder – by the time your dentist is seeing you in the dental chair, they have completed at least eight years of higher education.*



Joseph Suslik, a dental student at the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) School of Dentistry, is starting his final year of dental school this fall. Here's what he had to say about his path to becoming a dentist and what the road ahead looks like.

**grin!:** What made you want to pursue dentistry?

**Suslik:** It is very empowering and emotionally rewarding to help patients understand the cause of dental disease and to help them achieve good oral health. The ability to provide patients with treatment that will better their day-to-day lives keeps me working hard. I was always tinkering with things with my hands as a child, so dentistry's marriage of medicine and microsurgery made it an obvious career choice for me.

**grin!:** What kind of classes do you have to take?

**Suslik:** The first two years of dental school are a 50/50 split of lectures and time in lab practicing different treatments. The last two years are spent focusing mostly on clinical application by working with patients in our clinic. Our studies include anatomy, pharmacology, behavioral science, histology, microbiology, ethics, professionalism and a number of other classes.

**grin!:** Who are your teachers?

**Suslik:** With the exception of a few courses, e.g., pharmacology, most of our classes are taught by dentists. The majority still maintain their own practices or work at the faculty practice at VCU. A few are recently retired from private practice and spend a few days a week with us passing down what they have learned throughout their careers. It is great to work with so many different dentists; they each bring a distinct set of skills and pearls of wisdom.

**grin!:** How do you practice procedures such as extractions and dental surgeries?

**Suslik:** We first learn the theory and reasoning behind different procedures, practice them countless times on manikins, spend a lot of time observing others completing procedures and asking questions, then work alongside licensed dentists as we perform them ourselves.

**grin!:** How many years of schooling will you go through personally?

**Suslik:** I am proud to have spent an awesome four years at Virginia Tech (go Hokies!) studying biology and biochemistry and am finishing out another four years at VCU School of Dentistry. Definitely mark me down for at least another year of schooling after my graduation this coming May ... I just need to figure out in what!

**grin!:** What are your post-graduation plans?

**Suslik:** I am the proud fiancé of a dentist who is currently studying to become a pediatric dentist! She recently graduated from VCU School of Dentistry and is continuing her education down in Dallas, Texas, at Texas A&M School of Dentistry. Many of my weekends throughout this last year in school will be spent flying back and forth to Texas to spend time with her and our 1-year-old puppy. After graduation, I plan on joining her as she finishes her residency.



Owning my own practice would be an amazing opportunity, and I'm sure I'll get there one day, but for now, I plan on joining an existing practice. This will allow me to focus on dentistry and let someone else deal with the challenges of being a business owner.

**We wish Joseph and his fiancée the best of luck in finishing dental school and hope to have them as Delta Dental network dentists soon!**



## HOW TO FIND A DENTIST WHEN YOU MOVE AWAY FROM HOME

College brings all kinds of new experiences and people – new town, new friends, new living space, new job, new classes. With so much change happening, finding a new dentist is likely not at the top of most students' lists, but it should be.



Most college freshmen are probably used to their parents scheduling appointments for them, especially since most dental plans cover dependents up to age 26. Getting a dental visit on the calendar may not even be on their radars. Still, it's important for young adults to continue the good oral health habits they've grown up with, including visiting the dentist regularly. Keeping regular dental visits is important for many reasons such as prevention. Routine appointments allow dentists to monitor patients' oral health, helping to prevent and identify issues before they become more serious and costly.

Finding a dentist in a new town doesn't have to be daunting. Here are a few ways to get started:

- 1 TALK TO LOCALS OR STUDENTS** who have been there for a year or two and ask for recommendations.
- 2 ASK YOUR DENTIST AT HOME** if they have any recommendations in the area.
- 3 SAVE MONEY BY USING IN-NETWORK DENTISTS** – dentists who have agreed to set fees for Delta Dental patients. Go to [deltadental.com](http://deltadental.com) and use the Find a Dentist tool to locate a Delta Dental network dentist.



Of course, parents can always continue to make appointments to coincide with when kids are home for college breaks – but it's still a good idea to have a backup near school in case of an emergency. In addition to keeping up with regular dental appointments, college students can take several other actions to keep their mouths in A+ shape.



**CAN THE SODA.**  
Soft drinks are highly acidic – indulging too often can eventually erode tooth enamel.



**SLASH THE STARCHES AND SUGARS.**  
Chips, crackers and cookies may seem like great study snacks, but it's best to stick to fruits, veggies, cheeses and nuts.



**DON'T OVERDO THE DRINKING.**  
An occasional adult beverage is fine (if students are of legal age!), but a lifetime of excessive alcohol consumption has been linked to a greater risk for oral cancer.



**BUTT OUT.**  
Cigarettes and other forms of tobacco result in yellow teeth, bad breath and an increased risk of oral cancer and gum disease.

By keeping regular dentist appointments and practicing these oral health tips, students are sure to keep their smiles sparkling well past their college careers.



# dental benefits education: how to read an explanation of benefits

If you have a Delta Dental benefits plan, you should receive an explanation of benefits (EOB) in the mail from Delta Dental after a trip to the dentist's office. Though it looks similar to a bill, an EOB is not a bill, but actually an explanation of the services and procedures performed at your appointment, what your dental plan covers and what you may owe the dentist, if anything.

- A** You'll need the **Claim Number** to contact us with questions.
- B** **Procedure Code** and **Procedure Description** explain the services or treatments provided.
- C** **Submit Amount** is the fee charged by your dentist.
- D** **Approved Amount** shows Delta Dental's contracted fees for each procedure. **Allowed Amount** is the amount determined by your dental benefit plan. These amounts are often the same. If they differ, it's because of your plan's contract.
- E** **Patient Payment** is the amount you owe the dentist. Your dentist should not bill you more than this amount. **Delta Dental Payment** is the amount your Delta Dental plan covered.
- F** This section includes detail about Delta Dental's payment to your dentist.

**DELTA DENTAL**

Delta Dental  
123 Smile Street  
Chicago, IL 12345

John Doe  
456 Any Street  
Chicago, IL 12345

**A** Claim Number: 1-2222-333-44  
 Group Name: DELTA DENTAL PLANS ASSOC  
 Subscriber: JOHN DOE  
 Subscriber ID#: XXXXX5555  
 Patient: JANE DOE  
 Patient DOB: 01/31/1970  
 Dentist: IRA M. DENTIST

Other Carrier Paid: 0.00

**EXPLANATION OF BENEFITS \*\*THIS IS NOT A BILL\*\***

Service Date	Proc. Code	Procedure Description	Submit Amt	Fee Adjust	Approved Amt	Allowed Amt	Deductible Applied	Delta Dental Co-Pay	Patient Payment	Delta Dental Payment
1/30/2017	120	EXAM	49.00	8.00	41.00	41.00	0.00	100	0.00	41.00
1/30/2017	274	BITEWINGS-4	62.00	6.00	56.00	56.00	0.00	100	0.00	56.00
1/30/2017	1110	CLEANING	94.00	16.00	78.00	78.00	0.00	100	0.00	78.00
TOTALS			205.00	30.00	175.00	175.00	0.00		0.00	175.00

Payment To	Date	Check Number	Check Amount
SMILE DENTAL CARE	20170215	4664249	175.00

For Benefit Year: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/17

The amount applied to this individual's benefit year deductible is: \$0.00  
 The amount applied to this individual's annual benefit year maximum is: \$847.70  
 The amount applied to this individual's orthodontic maximum benefit is: \$0.00  
 The amount applied to this individual's out-of-pocket limit is: \$0.00

- G** **Deductible Applied** is the amount applied to the service that you must pay before Delta Dental picks up its share of the tab.
- H** **Delta Dental Co-Pay** identifies the percent the plan will cover per procedure.
- I** **Annual Maximum** is the maximum amount a dental plan will pay during a specified period, often a calendar year.



## dental trend spotlight: therapy dogs in dental offices

In recent years, dental offices have incorporated many innovative techniques to help their patients relax in the chair – music, TVs, aromatherapy and even spa-like treatments. But there's one that really gets our tails wagging: therapy dogs.

Therapy dogs have long been used to help people, including veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and hospital patients who need morale boosts. But a furry, friendly face can also have a calming effect on patients who get nervous in the dental chair.

It takes special canines to become therapy dogs: They need the right temperament to be around people, including kids. They also need to be able to deal with strange smells and noises, such as sounds from dental handpieces, compressors and other equipment. To get an official certification, dogs must go through weeks of training to be able to handle a variety of situations and people. Even after the initial training is complete, therapy dogs continue to receive reinforcement training on a regular basis.

An in-office therapy dog may have to pass another test – the allergy test. Many practices try to get hypoallergenic dogs, which means they're tolerable to people with pet dander allergies. But no dogs are 100 percent hypoallergenic, and some patients are simply not "dog people." When allergies or phobias arise, therapy dogs are usually confined to certain rooms or spaces to ensure patient comfort.

Although therapy dogs may have been intended to calm patients, their work extends beyond the person sitting in the chair. They often visit people in waiting rooms while their loved ones undergo procedures – and some dentists have noticed that an office dog helps the staff de-stress during the workday, too.





## your back-to-school *smile list*

*Gear up for school with these fun activities.*

- 1 Sharpen all of your No. 2 pencils. (Just don't chew on them.)
- 2 Get in one more beach or pool day. Don't forget your SPF lip balm!
- 3 Stay up too late one more time before "tomorrow is a school day."
- 4 Enjoy dinner with your family on your patio, deck or porch.
- 5 Take a spur-of-the-moment day trip.
- 6 Go shopping for a new backpack. Tuck a toothbrush and travel-size toothpaste inside!
- 7 Finish up your summer reading list.
- 8 Research some fun new lunches to take to school. (Try our tasty strawberry energy bites on page 5!)
- 9 Sleep in while you still can.
- 10 Create a back-to-school playlist to get pumped in the mornings.

