

# THE ORAL HEALTH EXPERT

It pays to know as much as possible about your oral health! This month, learn why it's important to understand your dental policy, the reason some adults get braces and how "laughing gas" got its name.

DELTA DENTAL OF ARIZONA

APRIL 2018

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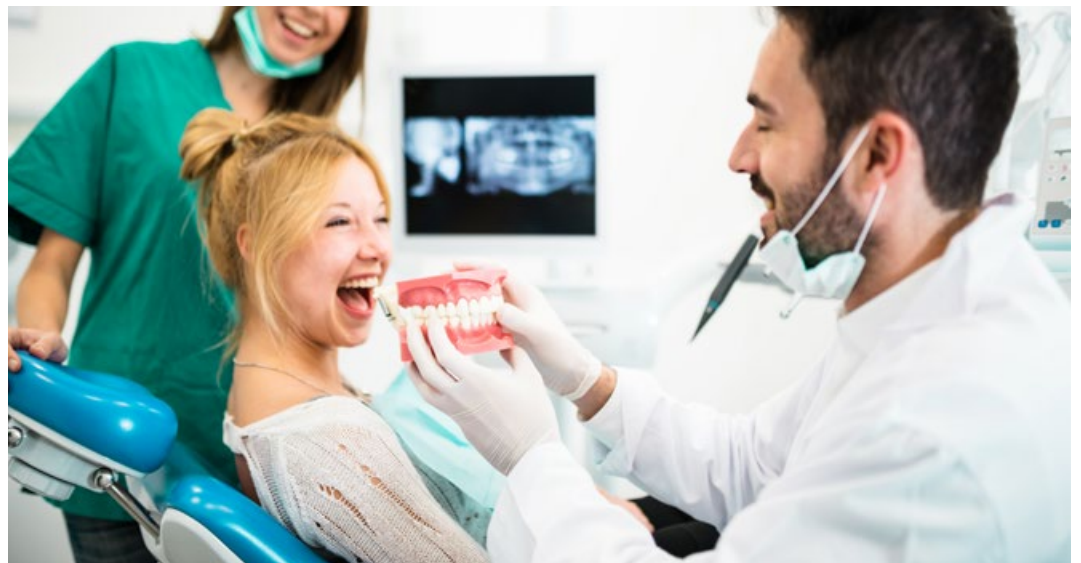


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## Does Laughing Gas Really Make You Laugh?



**"Relax, take deep breaths and count back from 100," is something your dentist may have told you before undergoing a complex dental procedure. You've been informed that you will be inhaling laughing gas, but oral surgery is no laughing matter – so where does the name come from?**

Dentists sometimes use laughing gas, also known as nitrous oxide or just nitrous, to mildly sedate patients during more complex dental procedures such as drilling or surgery. Laughing gas leaves the patient conscious, but dulls their pain and awareness. Its name comes from the calming effect that it has on the mind and body, sometimes causing a euphoric or giddy feeling that can even bring on a laughing fit.

Laughing gas is not only an easy alternative to full sedation, it's also extremely safe, even for children and pregnant women. The only people advised to pass on laughing gas are those with phobias or disabilities that prevent them from breathing through a mask; people with psychiatric conditions, such as schizophrenia; people who are sensitive to nitrous oxide; and people who suffer from emphysema or other lung conditions. <sup>1</sup>

Modern dental procedures are performed with the patients' comfort and best interest in mind. Laughing gas is just another way your dentist is working to make your visit as comfortable and pain-free as possible!



# The Benefits of Getting Braces as an Adult



**We often think of braces and other orthodontic treatments as being for children and adolescents, but plenty of adults get wired as well. In fact, according to the American Association of Orthodontists, more than 1 million adults in the U.S. have orthodontia.**

Some adults may seek straightening for aesthetic reasons – though their teeth may not be causing any specific problems, they simply want a straighter smile. But dentists may recommend braces for non-cosmetic reasons as well. Over time, crowded teeth or a bite that doesn't line up can lead to painful problems with teeth and gums, including tooth decay and gum disease. <sup>2</sup>

Though it's easier to treat alignment issues in adolescents because their jaws are still developing, adult problems can successfully be treated with a variety of braces or alignment devices. <sup>3</sup> Classic metal braces are available, of course, but clear braces and concealed orthodontia that have brackets on the backside of teeth are also options.

Cosmetic braces are often not covered by dental plans, so be sure to check your plan to see if orthodontia is covered and discuss costs with your dentist.

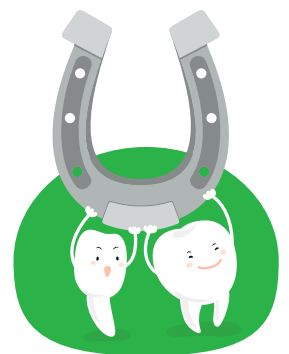
# SMILE STATS



Braces treat a “malocclusion,” which means “bad bite.” <sup>4</sup>



Approximately 45,750 Americans are diagnosed with oral or pharyngeal cancer yearly. <sup>5</sup>



The 1700s version of braces was horseshoe-shaped metal with holes that fit around teeth to correct alignment. <sup>6</sup>



# Why It's Important to Read Your Dental Policy



**Most people don't curl up in a comfy chair with a cup of coffee to read their dental policies, but it pays to thoroughly read through and understand your benefits.**

**First of all, knowing your plan can help you save money at the dentist's office.**

Being part of the Delta Dental PPO<sup>SM</sup> network typically results in the lowest out-of-pocket costs, while visiting a dentist in the Delta Dental Premier<sup>®</sup> network also offers discounts and protection from additional billing. It also helps to know your copay and deductible amounts, and if your plan requires waiting periods before your coverage kicks in for certain procedures.

**Whichever plan you have, you'll save the most money by using an in-network dentist instead of an out-of-network dentist.**

Delta Dental has one of the nation's largest networks – with nearly 156,000 dentists participating <sup>7</sup>– so your dentist may be part of our network already.



You may wonder why your plan covers certain procedures but not others, or why some treatments are covered at 100 percent but you have out-of-pocket expenses for others.

**All Delta Dental plans are designed with preventive care in mind.**

This means that most plans cover the cost of routine dental checkups, including cleanings and examinations. Covered procedures vary from plan to plan, and plans differ by state and employer.

Reviewing your benefits plan, especially prior to having costly dental work done, can help prevent financial surprises after your appointment.

# MOUTH-HEALTHY RECIPE: CUCUMBER ROLL-UPS

Ingredients:		Directions:
		<p>Use a vegetable peeler to slice the cucumber into thin strips, lengthwise. Mix together the yogurt, curry powder and lime juice. Season with salt and pepper to taste.</p> <p>Spread the yogurt mixture on top of the cucumber slices.</p> <p>Layer thinly sliced ham or turkey on top of the yogurt mixture. You can also try cheese, herbs, tomatoes or other healthy additions. Roll the strips up carefully, using a toothpick to secure if necessary.</p>
1 ½ cups Greek yogurt	1 cucumber	
		
1 tablespoon curry powder		
		
1 tablespoon lime juice		
		
Ham, turkey or other add-ins	Salt and pepper to taste	

## WANT MORE ORAL HEALTH TIPS AND NEWS?

VISIT THE DELTA DENTAL OF ARIZONA BLOG

[deltadentalazblog.com](http://deltadentalazblog.com)



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## SOURCES

<sup>1</sup><http://oralhealth.deltadental.com/Search/22,Delta117>

<sup>2</sup><http://oralhealth.deltadental.com/YoungAdult/Orthodontics/22,21456>

<sup>3</sup><http://oralhealth.deltadental.com/RelatedItems/22,HD57>

<sup>4</sup><http://www.sheknows.com/parenting/articles/807424/8-facts-about-braces>

<sup>5</sup><http://www.oralcancerfoundation.org/facts/#sthash.pac2hW11.dpuf>

<sup>6</sup><http://www.colgate.com/en/us/oc/oral-health/cosmetic-dentistry/early-orthodontics/article/sw-281474979337267>

<sup>7</sup>Delta Dental Fast Facts, September 2015