

# THE ORAL HEALTH EXPERT

DELTA DENTAL OF ARIZONA

FEBRUARY 2023

## OPEN WIDE SEE WHAT'S INSIDE



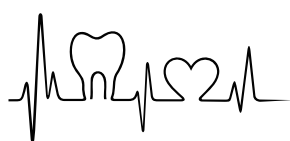
### P.2 All the President's Teeth



### P.3 Superstar Smile Snacks for Your Oscar Party



### P.4 Healthy Recipe: Salted Edamame



## How Dental Benefits Go Beyond Dental Issues



**In honor of American Heart Month this February, we're taking a look at an unexpected way to curb heart disease – visiting the dentist.**

Scheduling a dental appointment isn't just about taking care of your teeth. Your mouth can reveal a lot about your overall health. Signs and symptoms of dozens of systemic diseases, disorders, syndromes and other conditions can appear in the mouth. Bleeding gums, burning or dry mouth, loose teeth and bad breath (to name a few) may point to health issues in different areas of the body. These issues include diabetes, heart disease, infectious diseases and a variety of others. If these indicators are present, your dentist will refer you to your physician for next steps that encourage proper diagnosis.<sup>1</sup>

Visiting the dentist regularly for a thorough examination of your teeth, gums and just as importantly, all other soft tissues in your mouth has multiple benefits. It can prevent small problems from becoming major issues and identify systemic diseases early. The earlier you detect and treat these diseases, the easier they are to manage. Early detection can help prevent the disease from causing more serious problems and can lead to better overall health in the long run. A study completed by the American Heart Association found that people who receive regular teeth cleanings have a 24 percent lower risk of heart attack and 13 percent lower risk of stroke.<sup>2</sup>

It's also important to know that having a dental plan can help. Most dental plans cover preventive services, such as exams and cleanings, at little or no cost to you. And people with certain medical conditions, like heart disease, may be eligible for enhanced benefits. These benefits may include coverage for additional exams and cleanings, periodontal maintenance and fluoride treatments.

Think about your overall health and schedule your next trip to the dentist today.

# All the President's Teeth



**Celebrate President's Day on February 19! To mark the holiday that honors presidents of the United States, we're taking a look at a job that comes with a little less fanfare: the presidents' dentist.**

If you find it hard to carve time out of your busy day to go to the dentist, imagine how difficult it is for the president. That's likely why a dental office was installed in the basement<sup>3</sup> of the White House during the Herbert Hoover administration in the 1930s. But the facility was anything but sophisticated – in fact, early versions of the office consisted of nothing more than an old dental chair, and dentists were expected to bring in their own materials and tools, including the items needed to process X-rays.<sup>4</sup>

The in-house dentist's office has come a long way since those days. By the time Lyndon Johnson was president in the 1960s, the White House practice was so up-to-date that he was able to snag a fancy piece of equipment from the office for his own use: an electric toothbrush. And the facilities have expanded to include much more than just a chair – today, the White House dentist's office even has a fully functional operatory.

Should the first family have a dental emergency while vacationing at the rustic presidential retreat in Maryland, they don't have to worry about making it back to D.C.: There's a dental clinic at Camp David, too.

As you might imagine, it takes a special person to get that up close and personal with the commander in chief and his family. For training and security reasons, the dentist is typically selected from the National Naval Medical Center of the United States Navy.<sup>5</sup>

Some presidents seem to take advantage of the White House dentist more than others – George W. Bush met with dentist Donald Worm, DDS, on multiple occasions and chatted about non-political topics. But in 2015, Barack Obama told Jimmy Kimmel that he only discovered the White House dentist when he thought he had a loose cap.<sup>6</sup>

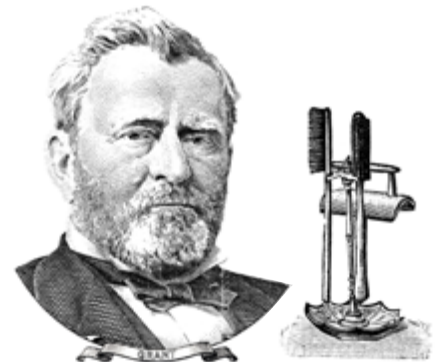
# SMILE STATS



According to the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry, Eva Mendes is the actress with the most glamorous smile.<sup>7</sup>

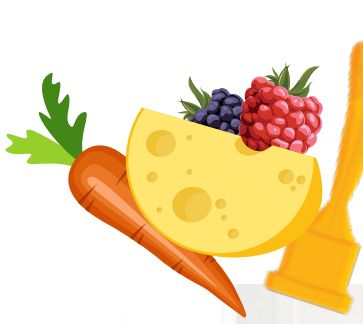


The actor with the best smile in Hollywood? Brad Pitt.<sup>8</sup>



As a general, Ulysses S. Grant once left for a 6-day battle with no baggage except a toothbrush.<sup>9</sup>





# Superstar Smile Snacks for Your Oscar Party



For many people, Academy Awards night is the event of the season. But the celebrities at the Oscars aren't the only ones who deserve the red-carpet treatment. Even if your Oscar party guests won't be posing for the paparazzi, you can give their smiles the star treatment with these snacks and drinks that won't wreak havoc on oral health.

- **Rosé? No way.** Champagne, prosecco and rosé may be having their moment in the spotlight, but these trendy tipples can be hard on tooth enamel because of their high acid levels.<sup>10,11</sup> Opt for sparkling water or even a dry martini instead.
- **Say "Yes, please," to cheese.** A fancy cheese tray – or even just slices of good ol' cheddar – is a no-brainer. Cheese is always a crowd pleaser, and you can dress it up with a charcuterie board including prosciutto, salami and chorizo. Throw in some healthy garnishes, such as almonds and pickles, and you've got a spread that's sure to impress. But skip the crackers and crostini. Foods that are high in carbohydrates break down into sugars that can harm your enamel just like the sugars in cookies and candies.
- **A veggie tray will save the day.** Instead of opening up a bag of chips, which are also high in carbohydrates and starches, put a veggie tray on the menu. Vegetables will provide the same satisfying crunch your guests crave while keeping their smiles healthy. If you're looking for something different than the usual celery, carrots and broccoli, try parsnips, jicama, snap peas, artichokes and asparagus.
- **Berries are merry.** For a little something sweet, opt for berries drizzled with dark chocolate. Dark chocolate has lower sugar content than milk chocolate and white chocolate, so it's a good choice for dessert.

## MOUTH-HEALTHY RECIPE: SALTED EDAMAME

### Ingredients:



2 cups fresh or frozen  
edamame in pods



6 cups water



1 tablespoon coarse salt

### Directions:

Bring water and salt to a boil. Add edamame and cook for 5 minutes or until tender enough to easily pop out of the pods. Drain and toss the pods with salt, then serve warm or cold.

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## SOURCES

<sup>1</sup><https://www.everydayhealth.com/dental-health-pictures/health-problems-your-dentist-can-spot.aspx>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.everydayhealth.com/dental-health-pictures/health-problems-your-dentist-can-spot.aspx>

<sup>3</sup>[https://web.archive.org/web/20061014152310/http://www.dent.umich.edu/alumni/dentalum/springsummer2006/Alumni\\_News.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20061014152310/http://www.dent.umich.edu/alumni/dentalum/springsummer2006/Alumni_News.pdf)

<sup>4</sup>[http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1992-12-06/features/9204210345\\_1\\_dental-care-dentist-dental-problems/2](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1992-12-06/features/9204210345_1_dental-care-dentist-dental-problems/2)

<sup>5</sup><http://navymedicine.navylive.dodlive.mil/archives/8049>

<sup>6</sup><http://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/presidential-facts>

<sup>7</sup><https://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/hollywoods-best-smiles/>

<sup>8</sup><https://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/hollywoods-best-smiles/3/>

<sup>9</sup>[http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1992-12-06/features/9204210345\\_1\\_dental-care-dentist-dental-problems/2](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1992-12-06/features/9204210345_1_dental-care-dentist-dental-problems/2)

<sup>10</sup><https://www.thecut.com/2015/09/my-rose-habit-ruining-my-teeth.html>

<sup>11</sup><https://www.allure.com/story/prosecco-teeth-damage>