

# THE ORAL HEALTH EXPERT

DELTA DENTAL OF ARIZONA

JULY 2020

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## What is COBRA Insurance?



“COBRA” stands for Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act and is a federal law to provide relief for those who experience a job loss, or other qualifying event, allowing them to continue their existing medical, vision and dental benefits for a limited period.<sup>1</sup>

### How Do I Qualify For COBRA Insurance?

Businesses with 20 or more employees are required to offer COBRA for those who qualify. To be eligible, you must have been enrolled in your employer’s health plan while working, and the health plan must continue to be in effect for active employees. You can qualify for COBRA if either of the following are true:

- Your employment has ended, either voluntarily or by your employer (for any reason other than gross misconduct) resulting in your loss of employee health coverage
- The number of hours you work was reduced to the point that you no longer receive benefits resulting in loss of employee health coverage<sup>2</sup>

### Is Dental Insurance Covered Under COBRA?

Along with medical and vision benefits, dental coverage is included under COBRA. However, you can’t choose new coverage or switch to a different plan from the one you held prior to your change in employment. You must also complete a separate, dental-specific COBRA enrollment process.

### How Do I Pay For COBRA Insurance?

Under COBRA, you pay your entire insurance premium. This amount is often higher than when you were employed, since your employer is no longer sharing the cost.

In some cases, it may cost less to enroll in a new, individual insurance policy than keep your prior coverage under COBRA. It’s a good idea to weigh your options and research individual plans or Medicaid before making a decision.

# 5 Tooth-Healthy Foods to Add to Your Summer Menu



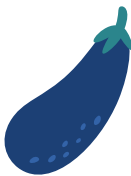
Burgers, potato salad and corn-on-the-cob may be the first foods that come to mind when you think about summer meals. But there are many tasty foods you may not even realize are in season. Let these five seasonal favorites inspire your next summer dish.



**Zucchini** is a superfood rich in key vitamins and minerals. Its magnesium, potassium and phosphorous can help strengthen your teeth and bones. Zucchini is a versatile summer vegetable that works well in dishes like kebabs and casseroles. You can also use it as a low-carb and tooth-healthy pasta alternative!



**Cherries** are low in calories and packed with antioxidants. They contain plenty of vitamin C, which can strengthen your gums and protect against gum disease. Try cherries in a salad, your morning oatmeal or blend them into a smoothie. Just be careful not to bite into the pits.



**Eggplant** is a high-fiber, low-calorie food that has many health benefits. It is full of calcium and potassium, which are some of the most important nutrients for healthy teeth and bones. Roast, grill, bake or sauté eggplant to make a delicious salad or side dish. You can also bake it into a casserole or purée it into a dip.



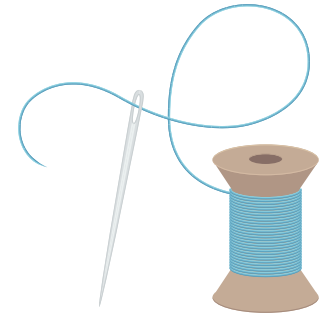
**Lima beans**, sometimes called “butter beans” because of their texture, are packed with minerals. Their calcium, potassium, magnesium and phosphorus help maintain healthy teeth and gums. Use lima beans in stews, soups, casseroles and succotash.



**Plums** are a great source of antioxidants as well as vitamins A and C, which are needed for healthy gums and saliva production. You can enjoy them all by themselves or add them to a salad. Plums are also great in sauces or smoothies!

These foods will help keep your meals colorful and your teeth and gums healthy. Keep your friends and family smiling by serving up some flavorful, seasonal dishes at your next summer gathering.

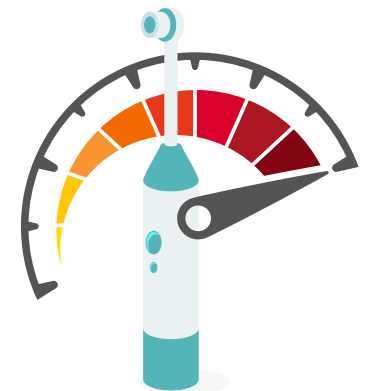
# SMILE STATS



Dental floss was invented by a New Orleans dentist in 1815 and was originally made from silk thread.<sup>3</sup>



Around 178 million adults in America are missing at least one tooth.<sup>4</sup>



Some of the fastest sonic toothbrushes on the market can brush your teeth with 50,000 strokes per minute.<sup>5</sup>

# The 5 Types of Cracked Teeth



Dentists often find cracks or fractures in teeth. Determining their size and direction plays a major role in the type of treatment that's needed. Symptoms of a cracked tooth may include spontaneous tooth pain, sharp sensitivity to cold temperatures or pain when biting down.<sup>6</sup>




The American Academy of Endodontists classifies tooth cracks into five categories:

1. **Craze Lines-** Craze lines are the most benign of tooth cracks and can be common in adults. They are tiny, hairline cracks that form in the tooth's enamel, typically appearing as faint vertical lines. Craze lines do not extend to the gums and, in most cases, don't require treatment.
2. **Fractured Cusps-** A fractured cusp occurs when a piece of the tooth's chewing surface breaks off. It often happens in teeth with large dental fillings. This type of crack doesn't harm the pulp of the tooth (where the nerves, blood vessels and connective tissue are located).<sup>7</sup> You may not feel any pain, but there could be sensitivity. A fractured cusp may need a root canal, but often can be fixed with a new filling.
3. **Cracked Teeth-** A tooth that cracks vertically (from the chewing surface up to the root) can occasionally extend beyond the gum line. With this type of crack, the tooth does not split in two and can often be saved. Cracked teeth tend to be more painful and require early attention to prevent loss of the tooth.
4. **Split Teeth-** A split tooth is when a crack travels all the way from the surface to the root, splitting the tooth in half. This type of crack is usually too extensive to save the tooth and extraction is typically necessary.
5. **Vertical Root Fractures-** A vertical root fracture begins at the root of the tooth and travels down to the chewing surface. Pain or other symptoms are usually minimal, and in some cases may go undetected. A vertical root fracture requires extraction unless a dentist can successfully save a portion of the tooth by removing the fractured root. Vertical root fractures almost always occur in teeth that have had previous root canal treatment.

If you are experiencing sharp pain when biting or sensitivity to cold temperatures, you may have a cracked tooth. You may be able to see a crack when you look in the mirror or feel the damage with your tongue.

If you have any of these signs or symptoms, make an appointment with your dentist as soon as possible. Treatment for a cracked tooth depends on the type, location and severity of the crack. The sooner a cracked tooth is diagnosed and treated, the better the outcome.

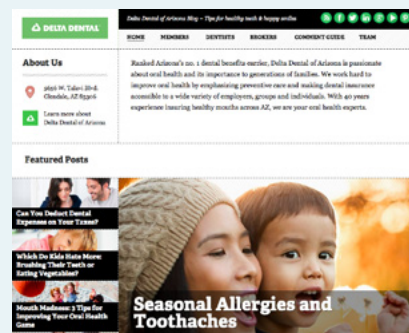
## MOUTH-HEALTHY RECIPE: ZUCCHINI-SQUASH CASSEROLE

Ingredients:	Directions:
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 medium zucchinis, chopped</li> </ul>	1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 medium yellow squash, chopped</li> </ul>	2. Lightly grease a casserole dish with butter or nonstick cooking spray.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ yellow onion, chopped</li> </ul>	3. Combine zucchini, squash, onion, ½ cup mozzarella cheese, ¼ cup
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ⅔ cup shredded mozzarella cheese</li> </ul>	cheddar cheese and basil in a large bowl. Season mixture generously
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese</li> </ul>	with salt and pepper. Stir in garlic powder, thyme and oregano.
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 tsp. dried basil</li> </ul>	4. Transfer mixture to prepared dish and bake for 25 to 30 minutes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper</li> </ul>	5. Remove casserole dish from oven and top with remaining mozzarella
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 tsp. garlic powder</li> </ul>	and cheddar cheeses. Sprinkle Parmesan cheese on top.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ tsp. dried thyme</li> </ul>	6. Return to oven and bake an additional 10 to 15 minutes or until cheese
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ tsp. dried oregano</li> </ul>	is golden and bubbly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ cup grated parmesan cheese</li> </ul>	7. Remove from oven and let cool 5 minutes before serving.

WANT MORE ORAL HEALTH TIPS AND NEWS?

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



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## SOURCES

<sup>1</sup>An Employee's Guide to Health Benefits Under COBRA. (2016, September). U.S. Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration. Retrieved from [dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/legacy-files/ebsa/about-ebsa/our-activities/resource-center/publications/an-employees-guide-to-health-benefits-under-cobra.pdf](https://dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/legacy-files/ebsa/about-ebsa/our-activities/resource-center/publications/an-employees-guide-to-health-benefits-under-cobra.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>FAQs on COBRA Continuation Health Coverage. (2015, November). U.S. Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration. Retrieved from [dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/legacy-files/ebsa/about-ebsa/our-activities/resource-center/faqs/cobra-continuation-health-coverage-consumer.pdf](https://dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/legacy-files/ebsa/about-ebsa/our-activities/resource-center/faqs/cobra-continuation-health-coverage-consumer.pdf)

<sup>3</sup><https://oralb.com/en-us/oral-health/dental-floss-history/>

<sup>4</sup>[https://www.prosthodontics.org/assets/1/7/ACP\\_Talking\\_points\\_for\\_Missing\\_Teeth\\_1-12-15.pdf](https://www.prosthodontics.org/assets/1/7/ACP_Talking_points_for_Missing_Teeth_1-12-15.pdf)

<sup>5</sup><https://www.forbes.com/sites/jeanbaptiste/2017/10/09/gadget-talk-oclean-one-is-the-fastest-smart-sonic-electric-toothbrush/#3bd9c1de6d0e>

<sup>6</sup>Cracking the Cracked Tooth Code: Detection and Treatment of Various Longitudinal Tooth Fractures. (2008). Endodontics Colleagues for Excellence. Retrieved from <https://www.aae.org/specialty/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2017/07/ecfesum08.pdf>

<sup>7</sup>Cracked Teeth. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.columbiaendodontists.com/endodontics-procedures/cracked-teeth.html>.