

THE ORAL HEALTH EXPERT

With wedding season in bloom, we discuss how dental coverage can change with marriage. We also look at teeth whitening options for your next big event.

DELTA DENTAL OF ARIZONA

JUNE 2018

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HOW DENTAL COVERAGE CHANGES WHEN YOU GET MARRIED

June can be a great time to schedule a wedding. That means it's also a good time to learn what can happen to your dental benefits when you get married.

When it comes to your dental coverage, marriage is considered a "qualifying life event." After a qualifying life event, you can make changes to your dental plan within a specified amount of time. If your change isn't requested in time, you may have to wait for open enrollment - the window of time when you can make changes to your dental coverage.¹ Check your dental coverage to see when the adjustment will take effect.

In the period during which you can make a change, you have a couple options. You can choose to keep your coverage as is, become a dependent under your spouse's plan or make your spouse a dependent under your plan. If one party does become a dependent, they have the option to keep their current coverage or discontinue it. If you choose to be covered under both plans, you have what is known as "dual coverage." The plan that covered you originally is the primary plan and the plan that covers you as a dependent is the secondary. The primary plan will pay its portion first and the secondary plan will act as a supplement.



Depending on what you choose, you may need to make a coverage update. For coverage obtained through employers, HR departments of both parties will need to make the requested change and update you and your spouse's personal information. If you don't receive coverage through an employer, you can reach out directly to your dental plan provider.

In the case that you decide not to switch your dental plan but change your last name, you will still need to contact your HR department or benefits provider to update your information. When updates have been made, you may want to request a new insurance card for your next appointment.

By knowing your options ahead of time, you can take some stress off your plate as you prepare for the big day.

Costs for whitening your pearly whites



Need to prep your smile for a big summer event? Take a look at the most common whitening methods from least to most expensive.

Whitening toothpaste can often be purchased for under \$20² and will take two to six weeks to show a noticeable difference. This method works by removing surface stains, such as those caused by drinking coffee or smoking. Since whitening toothpastes don't alter the natural color of your teeth or lighten stains that go deeper than the tooth's surface, the effects won't be as significant as other methods.³

Over-the-counter whitening strips and gels usually fall between \$10⁴ and \$100⁵ and can take 10 to 14 days to whiten teeth.⁶ The bleaching agents used for these products are weaker than those used by dentists, so they require longer application times than professional whiteners to achieve similar effects.⁷ Each product will be applied differently based on the instructions included in the package.

At-home whitening trays typically cost between \$150 and \$600 and take full effect in one to four weeks.⁸ Your dentist will customize a bleaching tray for you to take home and wear as instructed. The bleaching tray looks somewhat like a retainer or mouth guard in which peroxide-based bleaching gel or paste is contained during the whitening process.⁹ You may wear it overnight or during the day for several hours at a time.¹⁰

In-office bleaching can cost between \$500 and \$1,000 and normally takes less than two hours.¹¹ The process is completed painlessly at the dentist's office. After applying a bleaching agent, your dentist may also use light, heat or both to enhance the whitening effect. Depending on your situation, you may need to complete more than one session.¹²

Before choosing a whitening method, consult with your dentist to determine the best option for you. Whiteners may not work on all teeth. For example, teeth with porcelain crowns and composite fillings won't whiten along with your natural teeth, so their color may no longer match. Your dentist can also advise on the safety of your intended method.¹³ After or during your whitening process, you may experience a temporary increase in teeth sensitivity. Talk to your dentist if this happens to you.

SMILE STATS



In 2015, the teeth whitening industry hit \$11 billion in revenue.¹⁴



82 percent of people in a 2015 survey noticed a considerable difference in teeth color after in-office whitening treatments.¹⁵



Since 2010, 78 percent of women have changed their names when they get married. If your last name changes, notify your dental provider.¹⁶




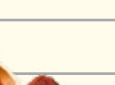







5 TIME-SAVING ORAL HEALTH HACKS



With every June comes Father's Day – the perfect time to recognize just how much dads do for their kids. Our gift to fathers this year is a list of five time-saving oral health hacks that can make things a little bit easier for dads on the go.

- 1 Keep oral health supplies in your car.**
Stock up with travel-size toothbrushes and toothpaste, floss, healthy snacks and water bottles. Choose mouth-healthy foods that don't spoil easily like sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, beef jerky and almonds. It's also good to keep a set of oral health supplies in your desk at work in case you need to freshen your breath before a meeting or to get that piece of lettuce out of your teeth after lunch.
- 2 Chew sugar-free gum.**
Indulged in a sweet treat, but don't have time to brush afterward? This hack can tide you over until you find a couple spare minutes. Pop in a piece of sugar-free gum after eating sweet or stinky foods. The gum will wash away food particles by increasing saliva and help protect tooth enamel by reducing acid levels.¹⁷
- 3 Find out if you're brushing correctly.**
The next time you have a dental appointment, ask your dentist or hygienist what parts of your mouth could use more attention during your oral health care routine. Or stop by the store to pick up plaque disclosing tablets. By chewing on a disclosing tablet, plaque that you missed will turn a bright color, so you know where to pay extra attention when you brush.
- 4 Eat “detergent foods” after meals or as midday snacks.**
No, these have nothing to do with laundry. Detergent foods are crunchy, fiber-rich foods that can partially remove plaque while you chew. They also increase saliva flow to wash away leftover food particles. Some great options to choose are raw carrots, celery, broccoli, cauliflower and apples.
- 5 The best hack of all: Avoiding costly and time-consuming dental procedures by practicing good oral health habits daily.**
Make sure to brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, floss once a day and visit the dentist regularly.

MOUTH-HEALTHY RECIPE: SWEET POTATO BURGERS

Ingredients:		Directions:
	1 medium sweet potato with skin removed, cubed	Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Fill a pot with
	1 16-ounce can chickpeas, drained	enough water to cover the sweet potato and
	½ small onion, chopped	bring to a boil. Add sweet potato and boil for 8-10
	2 garlic cloves, chopped	minutes or until soft. Remove from heat and drain
	Juice from ½ lime	water. Combine all ingredients in a food processor
	1 teaspoon paprika	and blend until combined. Scoop out 1/5 of the
	½ teaspoon chili powder	mixture and form it into a patty. Place on a baking
	1 teaspoon basil	tray covered with parchment paper. Repeat
	1 teaspoon oregano	process for the remaining mixture. Place baking
	½ teaspoon salt	tray with 5 patties into the oven and bake for 30-
	½ teaspoon pepper	50 minutes or until slightly golden brown and firm.

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