

WORD of MOUTH[®]

A Semiannual Publication of the Massachusetts Dental Society

Winter - Spring 2013

Guess Who ?



Celebrity Smiles



www.massdental.org
(800) 342-8747

The Massachusetts Dental Society (MDS) is pleased to make this publication available to our member dentists as a way of communicating important oral health information to their patients.

Information in **WORD OF MOUTH** articles comes from dental health care professionals of the MDS and other leading professional dental organizations, including the American Dental Association. If you have any questions about specific content that may affect your oral health, please contact your dentist. For timely news regarding oral health, visit the "For the Public" section of the MDS website at www.massdental.org.

Your comments and suggestions regarding **WORD OF MOUTH** are always welcome. All correspondence and requests for additional copies may be forwarded to Melissa Carman, Director of Publications, Massachusetts Dental Society, Two Willow Street, Suite 200, Southborough, MA 01745-1027, or email mcarman@massdental.org.

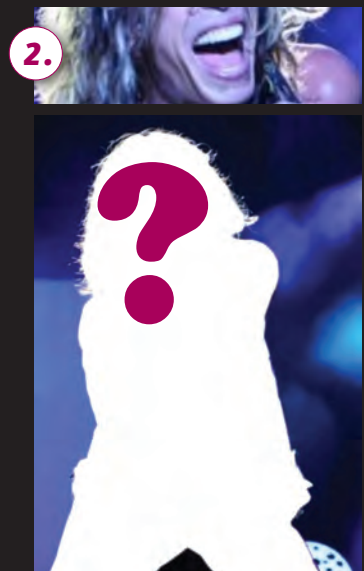
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Guess Who? Celebrity Smiles



"I spy" a smile that has lit up televisions since the 1960s and that belongs to America's most beloved TV father.



One of music's biggest voices, this rocker boasts an even bigger smile.



This cool duo from NECN serves up plenty to smile about as they explore Boston's hottest culinary spots!

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Massachusetts is well known for its contributions to all cultural arenas, including history, politics, entertainment, journalism, and professional sports. In fact, the Bay State is the birthplace and/or adopted home base of a multitude of famous faces.

The men and women pictured here are celebrated worldwide for their talents in movies, television, music, politics, and professional sports—but they all have “roots” in Massachusetts. Can you figure out who these famous Bay Staters are? You know their faces . . . but can you recognize their smiles?

Answers appear on page 6.



4.



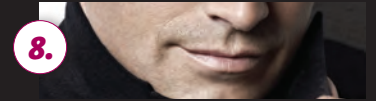
This funny lady proved she was more than ready for prime time with an Emmy-nominated role in a critically acclaimed NBC sitcom.



6.



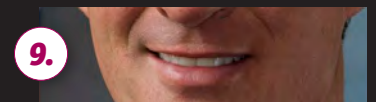
This slugger lights up scoreboards with his bat, and fans' hearts with his smile.



8.



This “friendly” actor might greet you with a wide grin and a “How you doin’?”



9.



This politico's smile is recognizable from the driver's side window of his pickup.



5.



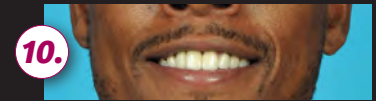
This author and lawyer spent her preschool years in “Camelot” with her pony, Macaroni. Hint: She inspired Neil Diamond to name a song after her.



7.



When it came to female singer-songwriters in the 1970s and 1980s, nobody did it better than this toothsome Grammy Award winner.



10.



“The Truth” is, this 10-time NBA All Star grew up in a Los Angeles suburb smiling over Lakers victories.

Winterize YOUR TEETH



With winter in full swing, many of us start to worry about the state of our cars and homes. Will my car make it through another winter? What can I do to “winterize” my home to operate efficiently and at its best? When it comes to “winterizing,” the Massachusetts Dental Society (MDS) believes that the same goes for one’s teeth—preventing sensitivity and injury can lead to a happier and healthier you.

Tooth grinding (also known as “bruxism”), jaw clenching, tooth whitening treatments, and even recent dental fillings can all cause tooth sensitivity. Sensitive teeth can also result from an uneven bite, cavities, and exposed roots. This sensitivity, which can take the form of a sharp, sudden pain or a dull ache, can also be triggered by extreme hot or cold temperatures and sometimes when eating sweet foods, such as candy. However, even simple things like breathing in frigid winter air or sipping a cup of hot coffee can cause discomfort.

The chilly air is not the only thing you need to be cautious about at this time of the year. Slipping and falling on icy sidewalks, driveways, or while ice skating or skiing can lead to oral injuries, such as bruised lips, cracked teeth, and broken jaws. Make sure to walk with care on icy, slippery surfaces. Also, crunching on ice cubes and hard candies—at any time of the year—can lead to chipped or cracked teeth.



There are steps you can take, however, to make sure your teeth are protected, including seeing your dentist regularly for cleanings and checkups to address any existing oral health issues and so he or she can offer preventive tips.

If you’re suffering from cold-weather tooth sensitivity, your dentist may recommend that you use sensitivity-reducing toothpaste to alleviate the symptoms. If you’re experiencing headaches, jaw pain, or chipped and sensitive teeth, your dentist may recommend that you wear a nightguard while sleeping to help with any pain or sensitivity associated with tooth grinding, and that you wear a mouthguard during sports to prevent injury.

Tooth whitening is another area where many people experience sensitivity, especially with the increased use of at-home whitening kits and products. The MDS estimates that approximately 50 percent of people who whiten their teeth will experience some tooth sensitivity. This can happen when the chemicals used to whiten teeth are not applied properly or are left on for too long. One can avoid some of this pain and discomfort by using sensitivity-reducing toothpaste before and after whitening, and also by being sure to follow the product’s directions and not over-whiten the teeth.

This winter, the only “white stuff” you should be stressing about is the snow, not your teeth.

WORD of MOUTH[®]



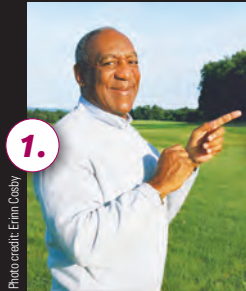
WORD SEARCH

To build a lifetime of good oral health, it's important that children adopt good oral health habits. Find and circle each of the words—all related to **children's oral health**—below.

- | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|----------|---------|
| DENTIST | DENTAL CLEANING | FLOSS | CAVITY |
| HEALTHY SMILE | WISDOM TOOTH | FLUORIDE | BRACES |
| TOOTH DECAY | TOOTHBRUSH | SEALANTS | FILLING |
| TOOTHPASTE | MOUTHGUARD | TONGUE | |

M I N F L U O R I D E L C E I T B D G E P D H
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Guess Who? Celebrity Smiles



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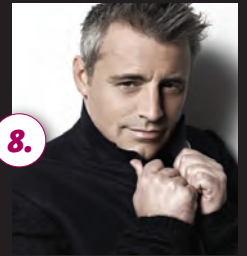
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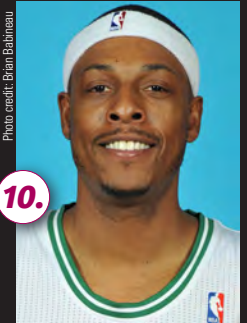
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5.



7.



10.

ANSWERS Continued from page 3

1. Bill Cosby

Comedian and educator Bill Cosby broke television's racial barrier with *I Spy* (1965–1968) as the first African American to co-star on a television series—while winning three consecutive Emmy Awards. Perhaps his greatest contribution to American entertainment and culture is *The Cosby Show* (1984–1992), which dominated the number-one spot for years and remains one of the most successful sitcoms in TV history. Mr. Cosby earned his Doctor of Education degree at UMass Amherst and makes his home in western Massachusetts.

2. Steven Tyler

One of the original “Bad Boys from Boston,” Aerosmith front man Steven Tyler, a man who has lavish houses all over the world, calls Marshfield his home. In his own words, “This is my solace, this is real to me, this is real. . . . I love it here, I love the smell of the sea air.”

3. Billy Costa and Jenny Johnson

Billy Costa and Jenny Johnson co-host the recently revamped *TV Diner*, the weekly restaurant review show on NECN that profiles restaurants and chefs throughout New England.

4. Amy Poehler

Amy Poehler, a Boston College graduate, grew up in Burlington. She first earned fame as a regular cast member of *Saturday Night Live*, and she continues to produce laughs with her Emmy Award–nominated role on the NBC sitcom *Parks and Recreation*.

5. Caroline Kennedy

The daughter of President John F. Kennedy, Caroline Kennedy serves as president of the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation and has authored and edited eight books, including 2002 best-seller *Profiles in Courage for Our Time*. In 2007, singer Neil Diamond revealed that a photo of a young Caroline riding her pony on the White House grounds inspired his famous hit “Sweet Caroline.”

6. David Ortiz

Red Sox first baseman/designated hitter David Ortiz (aka “Big Papi”) began knocking the long ball over the Green Monster in 2003, helping drive the team to World Series championships in 2004 and 2007. As well known for his swing as he is for his beaming smile, eight-time All-Star Big Papi holds the Red Sox record for home runs (54) in a regular season (2006).

7. Carly Simon

Singer-songwriter—and full-time Martha's Vineyard resident—Carly Simon penned 13 Top 40 hits in the 1970s and 1980s, including the number-one hits “Nobody Does It Better” and “You're So Vain.” In addition to her recording career, Carly has authored five children's books.

8. Matt LeBlanc

Best known for his role as the lovable Joey Tribbiani on NBC's *Friends*, Newton native Matt LeBlanc won a 2012 Golden Globe Best Actor Award for his role as a comically exaggerated version of his on-screen persona on Showtime's *Episodes*.

9. Scott Brown

Former U.S. Senator from Massachusetts and current Wrentham resident Scott Brown has served in both the Massachusetts House of Representatives and State Senate. He is a graduate of Tufts University and Boston College School of Law.

10. Paul Pierce

Boston Celtics Captain Paul “The Truth” Pierce (No. 34) has been pounding the parquet in the Boston Garden since being drafted in 1998. He led the NBA in total points (2,144) in 2002, and in 2008 helped lead the Celtics to their 17th NBA championship, for which he was named the NBA Finals MVP. In addition to his achievements on the court, Pierce champions those less fortunate through The Truth Fund, a charitable foundation that provides educational and life-enriching opportunities for underserved youth.

Take a “CRACK” at Keeping Your Teeth Healthy

While you may know that grinding your teeth and biting down on ice cubes and hard candy can cause chipped teeth and dislodged crowns and fillings, not to mention pain, did you know it could also lead to something less perceptible: cracked tooth syndrome?

The top layer of the tooth, enamel is the hardest substance found in the body. Enamel is what protects the inner part of your tooth from injury, but when enamel is weakened, your tooth can become more susceptible to problems, such as cracking and breaking. Sometimes, the cracks in the enamel are too small to show up on dental X-rays or are located below the gum line. These tiny cracks are known as cracked tooth syndrome, which most often occurs in the back molars, since that’s where most of the force is located during biting.

There are several steps you can take to avoid this condition. First, you may want to take a “crack” at not putting certain items in your mouth. Accidentally biting down on small, hard objects—such as ice cubes, popcorn kernels, fruit pits, or food decorations—can cause a cracked tooth. Since all of the biting force is concentrated on the small area of the tooth that comes into contact with the hard object, small fractures in the tooth can occur.

Additionally, cracked tooth syndrome can occur from bruxism (teeth grinding). Bruxism is involuntary and is often the result of stress. The force of the grinding usually occurs while sleeping, and it may even make a loud enough noise to wake up your mate. Physical symptoms of grinding can manifest themselves through sore facial muscles or jaw joints. What’s more, the grinding can eventually lead to cracked teeth if the force is great enough.

Lastly, while giving and receiving gifts can be enjoyable, it can also pose problems for your oral health. Many people use their teeth to cut through strings and tape, open packages, and remove tags from new clothing. These practices can cause your teeth to chip or crack, leading to cracked tooth syndrome. So always use a pair of scissors to open your child’s new toy or remove that tag from a sweater—*never* use your teeth.


How do you know if you have cracked or chipped a tooth? You might experience pain or sensitivity where the crack is located when chewing, and the cracked tooth might exhibit sensitivity to hot or cold foods and beverages. The pain might be brief or may linger.

It is best to visit your dentist if you think you have cracked or broken a tooth, or think you are experiencing bruxism. Although a cracked tooth may not show up on X-rays, your dentist will probably still want to get some imaging to rule out dental decay or a cavity as the cause of the pain. An

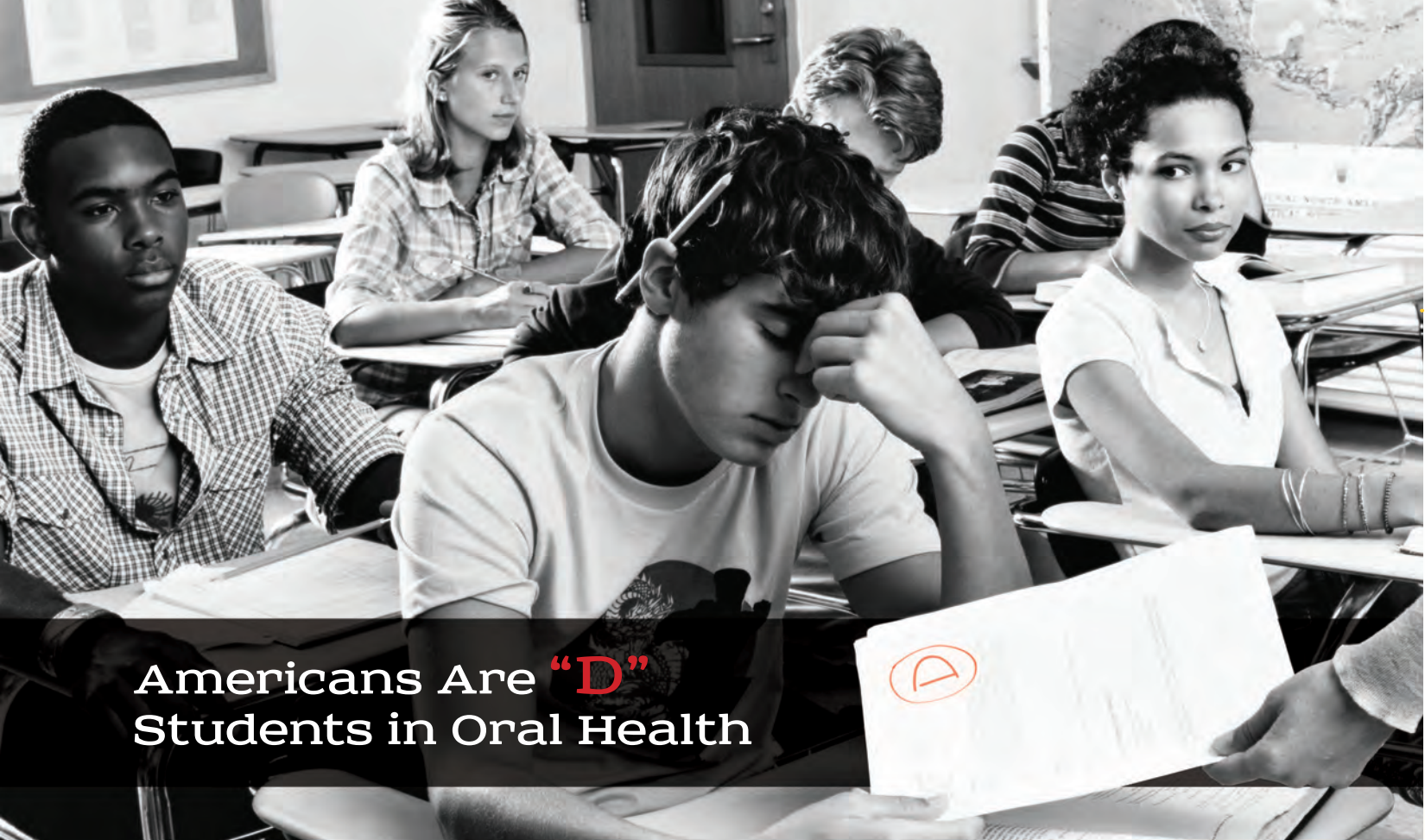
instrument will be used to look for cracks in the tooth, and the gum line will also be examined. Treatment for a cracked tooth depends on the depth and severity of the crack and where it is located. A simple crack might require a crown on the tooth, while more severe cracks may require a referral to an endodontist, a dentist who specializes in the roots of teeth.

Another thing to be aware of is that, upon your own inspection, teeth (especially front teeth) will sometimes look to have “cracks” in them. In actuality, these are usually just surface imperfections or “craze” lines, which are very common and usually not a problem. Of course, it is always best to check with your dentist to be sure.

By following these simple precautions, you can have a healthy smile and minimize your chance of a “crack attack.”



Accidentally biting down on small, hard objects—such as ice cubes, popcorn kernels, fruit pits, or food decorations—can cause a cracked tooth.



Americans Are “D” Students in Oral Health

When it comes to being knowledgeable about their oral health, many Americans are not making the grade, according to a national survey of 1,500 adults conducted by the American Dental Association (ADA). So, when it comes to your oral health, what kind of student are you?

The survey results were released last summer in conjunction with the launch of the ADA's new consumer-oriented website, MouthHealthy (www.mouthhealthy.org), which aims to improve Americans' oral health. Alarmingly, Americans, on average, scored a “D” on a series of true-or-false questions ranging from how often to brush and at what age a child's first visit to a dentist should be, to what causes cavities. The dental IQ quiz is also featured on the MouthHealthy website so you can test your own knowledge. The website is filled with prevention, care, and treatment information to help people of all stages of life achieve and maintain optimum oral health. The site also features videos, tips, and activities, as well as a special section to make oral health care fun for children.

“As a profession, we constantly strive to provide more knowledge to our patients about the importance of oral health to their overall health,” says ADA President Dr. Robert Faiella. “Hopefully, this will empower them to make good health care decisions for themselves and their families.”

Visit www.mouthhealthy.org and test your knowledge of oral health with the Fact or Fiction Quiz (there's one for all the various stages of life) and to learn more about oral health.

Some of the survey highlights:

- 90 percent of respondents mistakenly believe they should brush after every meal (the ADA recommends only twice a day);
- 65 percent of respondents mistakenly believe they should only replace their toothbrush twice a year (the ADA recommends every three months);
- 75 percent of respondents don't know at what age to take their child to the dentist for the first time (the ADA recommends within six months after the first tooth appears or no later than the child's first birthday); and
- 81 percent of respondents mistakenly think that sugar alone causes cavities (it's really bacteria in the mouth that feed on sugar and then produce acid that attacks tooth enamel; in time, these acid attacks weaken the enamel to the point where a cavity forms).

DON'T DREAD THE DENTAL CHAIR

Does this sound familiar? You have an appointment scheduled for your twice-a-year dental cleaning, and just *thinking* about going to that appointment makes your heart race. If so, you could be experiencing dental anxiety.

Dental anxiety is very common, with approximately 30 to 40 million Americans suffering from some type of fear of going to the dentist. That's approximately 9 to 15 percent of Americans who may avoid going to the dentist. According to the Massachusetts Dental Society (MDS), dental anxiety can range from a mild feeling of "I don't want to go to the dentist" to something more intense called a dental phobia—where sufferers have an irrational fear of dental visits. They may worry excessively and will do anything to avoid going to the dentist—even suffering with gum disease, oral pain, or chipped or unsightly teeth just to avoid the dental chair.

Dental phobias may stem from an unpleasant dental experience you had when you were younger. Or perhaps you have a fear of pain, needles, or simply hearing the "buzz" of a drill. Whatever the cause, it's important to take charge of your oral health and not let fear of the dental office take charge of you. Small oral health problems, if left untreated, can turn into bigger—and more costly—issues down the road.

The first step in overcoming your anxiety is finding a dental team that makes you feel comfortable and with whom you can communicate easily. Your dental team, which usually includes the dentist, dental hygienist, and dental assistant, should all be able to explain what they are doing at all steps of treatment so that you know what to expect. Feel free to let them know that you are anxious so they can help you relax and feel more at ease. And during your appointment, try taking long, deep breaths to counteract your anxiety and calm that racing heart.

You may have also heard of dental offices called "dental spas." A dental spa aims to offer a relaxing, calming atmosphere. You may encounter heated towels, scented candles, and a spa-like ambiance. In addition, many regular dental offices now have flat-screen televisions in the operatories, so you can wake up with the *Today* show or catch your favorite soap opera or sports channel during your appointment. This may help



take your mind off the dental treatment you're receiving. What's more, many dental treatment techniques have evolved in recent years and are more high-tech—and pain-free—than you may remember and that may help ease your discomfort and anxiety.

The American Dental Association also has some tips on how to reduce fear of dental visits:

- 1. Be honest.** Let your dentist and dental hygienist know that you are anxious and what specifically you are nervous about (e.g., experiencing pain, having an exam, getting a filling, etc.). Many times, simply discussing your fears can help your dental team ensure that you feel comfortable and may allow them to adapt the treatment to accommodate your anxiety.
- 2. Pick a good time for your appointment.** Is there a time of day when you are less rushed? Say, first thing in the morning or on a Saturday? By not hurrying to your appointment, you may feel more relaxed and at ease.
- 3. Rock out.** It may sound silly, but closing your eyes and zoning out to music on your MP3 player might be just the distraction you need during a dental appointment.

So smile, take a deep breath, and pop on those headphones. Your smile—and your oral health—is worth it.

To Be or Not to Be — That Is the Question

“What do you want to be when you grow up?”

That’s a question that many children are asked as they go through their school years. Common answers may range from ballerina and baseball player to firefighter and astronaut. And then there are the more imaginative pipe-dream responses of princess and superhero; according to a 2009 *Forbes* survey of kindergarteners, 21 percent chose the latter. While the idea of being a ballerina or baseball player—or princess or superhero—may seem exciting, one other career choice is professionally and personally rewarding: **dentist**.

There are a multitude of reasons why pursuing a career as a dentist can be fulfilling. In addition to contributing to the health and well-being of others, including changing the way a person looks and feels about himself or herself, you have the chance to utilize both science and creativity. In providing treatment, dentists combine visual memory, excellent judgment of space and shape, and a high degree of manual dexterity on a daily basis. Also, technological advances in the field in the form of cutting-edge computer and X-ray technology will continue to offer exciting challenges in the delivery of treatment. In addition, dentistry has a promising future for those looking to succeed. Large numbers of dentists are expected to retire in the next 20 years, which will create a need for new dentists, making now an ideal time to consider dentistry as a career.

If you need more incentive, the American Dental Association offers the following:

“Ten Great Reasons to Be a Dentist”

- 1. Service to Others**
Help people maintain and improve their oral health, quality of life, and appearance
- 2. Balanced Lifestyle**
Have the flexibility to balance professional and personal life
- 3. Empower Your Patients**
Give patients smiles they are proud to wear
- 4. Technology and Research**
Be involved with the scientific advancement of dentistry
- 5. Be a Leader**
Earn respect from your family, friends, and community
- 6. Prevention/Education**
Be an educator on the importance of oral health
- 7. Detect Disease**
Treat oral health and detect disease, including cancer and cardiovascular issues
- 8. Be Creative**
Use your artistic and scientific talents
- 9. Success Potential**
With the aging population and increase in access to care, the demand and need for dentistry is on the rise
- 10. Self-employment**
Own a dental practice and be your own boss



TOOTH "PICKS"

Archaeologists Don't Mind Their Own Beeswax



In September, archaeologists in Italy announced that they had found what they believe to be the oldest dental filling in history in a 6,500-year-old jawbone. But what's got the dental world really buzzing is the discovery that the material used in this earliest evidence of dental filling was beeswax. According to an article in the *New York Times*, the jawbone, which was discovered in 1911 in Slovenia and believed to be the remains of a 30- to 34-year-old man, had been on display in the Museum of Natural History in Trieste, Italy. The researchers studied the bone using a large ion accelerator and found that the jaw featured a left canine tooth with a crack in its hard enamel and softer dentin layers. They speculate that the beeswax was placed shortly before or after the time of the man's death, although it is impossible to determine how or under what circumstances the filling was placed. If it was placed when he was still alive with the intention of relieving a toothache, this would be the oldest-known example of a therapeutic dental filling. And that's something to buzz about.

Going for the Gold—And a Broken Tooth

Were you, like most Americans, captivated by the 2012 Summer Olympics in London? You may have noticed that—and wondered why—some gold medalists would bite their medal at the medal ceremony. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, more than 15 percent of gold medalists bit their medals. That number breaks down even further, to 24 percent of the male gold medalists and 5 percent of the female gold medalists. But why munch on the medal? The practice dates back to the time when coins were actually made of real gold (most coins, and the Olympic gold medals themselves, are now made mostly of silver), and people would bite the coin to verify that it was, in fact, gold. They did this because if it was real gold, it would show a mark, since real gold is softer than gold-plated lead. When it comes to the Olympics, the trend started years back and just kind of stuck. Medalists have seen photos of past winners biting their medals, and so they think they should do the same. But what makes for a cute photo op may make for a quick trip to the dentist: At the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, B.C., a German silver medalist in the luge bit his medal during the ceremony—and broke his tooth.



The Hot Truth About Coffee Burns

If you've ever burned your tongue with a sip of steaming coffee or other hot beverage, you know how painful that can be. So how do you relieve that scalding pain? Look on the Internet, and you'll find a few home remedies, ranging from the obvious to the not-so-obvious. The obvious entails drinking cold water or placing an ice cube on the tongue. This treatment, not unlike placing a cold compress on a skin burn, acts as a mild anesthesia by numbing the affected area. The not-so-obvious remedy recommends rinsing the mouth with a mixture of 1 teaspoon salt and 1 cup warm water. It's believed that the salt can draw infection to the tongue's surface, where it can be eliminated, and the salt also helps neutralize the acidic environment that breeds bacteria.

But perhaps the most obvious way to heal a tongue burned from too-hot coffee is to avoid it in the first place and let that mug o' joe cool down a bit before you sip.



Cavities: Not Nuts About Coconut Oil



Back in the 1970s, sunbathers would slather coconut oil on themselves in an attempt to get a dark tan. Nowadays, with the increased awareness of and vigilance against skin cancer and the availability of high-SPF sunscreens, coconut oil may be seen as a little less than healthy. But scientists from the Athlone Institute of Technology in Ireland have found that the natural antibiotic properties of the tropical oil may offer some oral health benefits. When the researchers tested the antibacterial action of coconut oil both in its natural state and when treated with enzymes—which created a process similar to digestion—they found that the enzyme-treated coconut oil strongly inhibited the growth of most strains of *Streptococcus bacteria*, including *S. mutans*, which is the strain responsible for tooth decay. It's believed that the enzymes transform the oil into an active acid that is thought to stop the bacteria's growth. The researchers maintain that adding enzyme-modified coconut oil to oral hygiene products may help fight the bacteria that cause tooth decay. This is interesting news, but more research needs to be conducted to determine the full oral health benefits (and safety) of adding coconut oil to oral care products.



Have ONE.

First Dental Checkup



By ONE.

First Birthday



Yes, babies **can** develop tooth decay.

That's why the Massachusetts Dental Society, along with the American Dental Association, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, and the Massachusetts Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, recommends that children have their first dental visit within six months of the eruption of their first tooth or by age one, whichever comes first.

This first visit allows the dentist to check not only for tooth decay, but also for other things that can adversely affect teeth and gums. Parents will also be shown how to properly clean their baby's mouth.

It's never too early for a first dental visit to put your child on the road to good oral health that can last a lifetime.

So just think about ONE.



massdental.org