

Oral Wellness Newsletter



Give the gift of safety

Nothing beats the gift-giving season — seeing the joy and smiling faces a toy can bring is second-to-none. When choosing toys for young kids, keep each child’s age and skill level in mind.

Keep kids safe during Safe Toys and Gifts Awareness Month by following these guidelines from Prevent Blindness America.

- **For kids under the age of three, the toy and its parts should be larger than the inside of a toilet paper roll.** Kids at this age tend to put things in their mouths, so avoid gifting toys with small parts, including magnets and “button” batteries. This helps decrease the risk of choking.
- **Art materials should say ‘nontoxic’.** Crayons and paints should meet national safety standards. Look for ASTM D-4236.
- **Gifts that shoot or have parts that fly off should be avoided.** Flying objects can be dangerous to kids, especially those under five years old.
- **For kids with special needs, find toys that appeal to different senses, such as sound, movement and texture.** Consider safe shared toys that encourage kids to play together.

Use [this list from Prevent Blindness](#) when you shop this holiday season!



Shorter days got you down?

What is Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) and how can it impact our health?

Less sunlight and shorter days can cause a pattern of depression symptoms. This includes low mood, energy and self-esteem.¹ In winter, you can experience more tiredness and weight gain.¹ But did you know SAD can also lead to unhealthy gums and teeth?

When feeling depressed, it can be easy to lose track of your daily routine. Brushing and flossing your teeth can take a back seat. You may want to eat more sugary food and drinks, which can increase your risk of cavities. SAD can also make it harder to leave the house and show up for dentist appointments. This can all lead to a higher risk of poor oral health.²

Here are some ways you can combat [SAD](#) and keep up on your healthy routines:

- Seek treatment that might include light therapy, psychotherapy and medications.
- Make your environment sunnier and brighter.
- Get outside.
- Establish a normal sleeping routine.

If you're starting to feel down when the seasons are changing, consider [smiling more — it just might help!](#)



Avoiding a dental emergency this holiday season

'Tis the season for holiday cheer! While December is always a busy month, it's also a good time to visit your dentist before the end of the year. After all, dental emergencies don't go away over the holidays. Keep your smile merry and bright all season long with these six tips:

1. Have your dental work done before the holidays and keep any checkups you already have scheduled.
2. Be cautious of the foods you bite into.
3. Never use your mouth to open items, as this can result in cracked or chipped teeth.
4. Limit sticky, chewy and gummy treats that can cling to your teeth and put you at risk for cavities.
5. Keep sports and games light and fun to avoid damage to your mouth.
6. Stick to your normal dental routine over the holiday season.

The drive to start the new year off right can be a great reason to visit your dentist this month. If you do happen to have a dental emergency around the holidays and can't get in to see your dentist, United Concordia Dental offers [virtual visits](#) that gives you access to a dentist wherever you are.



Holiday Trivia

1. What hat did the tooth fairy wear in The Santa Clause 2?

- A. Fedora
- B. Newsboy cap
- C. Bomber hat

2. In what holiday movie did the elf want to be a dentist?

- A. The Santa Clause
 - B. Rudolph
 - C. An Elf's Story
-

Trivia answer:

1. C

2. B

Sources:

[1] Seasonal Affective Disorder; UC Health; 2021. Retrieved November 2023.

[2] How Depression is Linked to Oral Health; Care Quest Institute for Oral Health; 2022. Retrieved November 2023.

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