

October 2020

## Oral Wellness Newsletter

*Hello, here's our October newsletter! Share the content by using the "forward this email" button. Or highlight the text you want, then copy and paste it wherever you like.*



### Halloween candy boos and don'ts

It's spooky how much sugar kids consume during this annual candy free-for-all. According to Reader's Digest, the average trick-or-treater eats about 7,000 calories. That's equal to almost three cups of sugar! What's even scarier? Many candies can harm your child's teeth in ways beyond the excess sugar. Sour candies are acidic, which can wear away the outer tooth enamel. And chewy, sticky candies can dislodge braces and other orthodontic devices. Of course, you'll make sure they brush and floss after gobbling up their goodies. But first, check out our candy rating scale so you can sort out the least frightful options.

[Bone up on the worst-to-best candy.](#)



## Nail file no-no!

This TikTok trend has dental professionals really ticked off. Filing down your own teeth isn't just dangerous, the damage you're doing is irreversible.

Though the viral videos make tooth filing seem simple and harmless, that's completely false. According to Ericka Cauthon, dental hygienist and United Concordia Dental Oral Wellness Consultant, you're removing the enamel that protects your teeth – and that can't be undone. Your enamel will never grow back.

If you have a chipped tooth or if your smile is uneven, leave the repairs to the professionals. Dentists are licensed and highly trained in enameloplasty, the procedure where teeth are reshaped using special tools. Your dentist also knows just how much enamel can be safely removed and still keep your teeth healthy.

So don't reach for that nail file, unless you're planning a mani-pedi.

[Read what to do for a chipped tooth](#)



## Baked pumpkin oatmeal

*Serves 4*

It's pumpkin season! Can you think of a better way to start a cozy fall day than with a warm bowl of baked pumpkin oatmeal?

Pumpkin is loaded with vitamins and minerals that are great for boosting your immune system, which is especially important as the weather gets colder.<sup>[1]</sup> Oats are a great source of carbs, fiber, protein and fat. They've been shown to help with gut health, blood sugar control and weight loss.<sup>[2]</sup>

Enjoy this delish and heart-healthy breakfast!

[Get the recipe](#)

### Ingredients:

- 2 cup old-fashioned rolled oats, uncooked (not quick cooking)
- ¼ cup brown sugar substitute
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 cup fat-free milk

1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 cup pureed pumpkin  
1 tablespoon canola oil  
1 egg, beaten  
Non-stick cooking spray

**Directions:**

Preheat oven to 375° F. Spray a 1.5-quart baking dish with cooking spray.

In a large bowl, combine oats, brown sugar substitute, cinnamon, nutmeg and baking powder.

In a medium bowl, combine the milk, vanilla extract, pumpkin, oil and egg.

Add the pumpkin mixture to the oat mixture; stir well. Pour oat mixture into dish and bake for 20 minutes. Serve warm.

*Nutrition info per serving*

295 calories | 8g fat | 48g carbs | 10g protein | 410mg potassium

Brought to you by [Diabetes Food Hub](#)



## What's a dental hygienist?

In honor of National Dental Hygiene Month, we're celebrating the important role of a dental hygienist. Just like nurses help doctors, dental hygienists work alongside dentists, helping to care for patients.

Dental hygienists have earned specialized degrees and are licensed and registered in the states in which they work. They're oral health professionals trained to do more than just polish your pearly whites.

In many states, dental hygienists also...

- Screen for signs of cavities, gum disease and oral cancer
- Assist the dentist in numbing the tooth or mouth
- Take X-rays and impressions of teeth for oral appliances, dentures and crowns
- Educate on oral hygiene, cavity prevention, smoking cessation and proper nutrition

- Perform non-surgical treatments for gum disease such as scaling and root planing
- Apply fluoride and sealants

So take advantage of your dental hygienist's knowledge. Feel free to ask questions or talk about any concerns you have at your next appointment. As a conversation starter, take along the results from our online dental health assessment. Just answer a few simple questions to get a summary of your oral health status and possible risk factors, then print a copy for your dental hygienist and dentist to review.

[Take My Dental Assessment](#)

## Breast cancer and your oral health

Gum disease is linked to an increased risk of breast cancer.<sup>[3]</sup> And many breast cancer survivors experience dental problems due to side effects from treatment.<sup>[4]</sup> Since October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, we're sharing information to help everyone who has been diagnosed to take care of their mouths during treatment. We've collected breast cancer and oral health resources and tips. Plus, a guide for talking to your dentist if you're experiencing oral issues. Use this information yourself, or pass it on to someone you love.



[Learn the oral side effects of cancer treatment](#)

[Questions to ask your dentist before treatment](#)



**Slim down your PSL**

We love a good pumpkin spice latte as much as the next person, but our teeth (and waistlines!)...not so much. A 16-ounce PSL served up by your favorite neighborhood barista weighs in at 380 calories with 14 grams of fat and 52 carbs – 50 of them from sugar!\*

But don't panic yet PSL lovers. Check out these tips to make your mugful a bit more mouth-friendly.[5]

1. **Cut calories** by asking for less pumps of flavored syrup.
2. **Substitute 2% milk** with a dairy-free option.
3. Get a **sugar-free latte** and add your own pumpkin spices to taste.

And don't forget – always rinse with water after you consume coffee or sugar!

\*[starbucks.com](http://starbucks.com)

[Lea en Español](#)

[Download the pdf](#)

[1] 9 Impressive Health Benefits of Pumpkin; [Healthline](#); August 28, 2018.

[2] 9 Health Benefits of Eating Oats and Oatmeal; [Healthline](#); July 19, 2016.

[3] Periodontal Disease and Breast Cancer: Prospective Cohort Study of Postmenopausal Women; American Association of Cancer Research; 2015.

[4] National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research; 2019.

[5] [5 Ways to Make Your Pumpkin Spice Latte Habit Healthier](#)

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