

# Pregnancy, Dental Health, and Vision Health

## Blog Writing

Pregnancy can be a lot to handle. Preparation for a new baby can mean a lot of stress from setting up a nursery, shopping for the necessities and extra doctor's appointments. However, it's just as important during this busy time in your life to take care of yourself as a soon-to-be new mom. While no two pregnancies are the same, visiting your dentist and eye doctor regularly during your pregnancy can help you track any change of your own health during this time. Pregnancy can affect your vision and oral health, so it's even more important to check in on these aspects of your health as these changes can affect your baby's health. Some oral health conditions can even impact a baby's birth weight or oral health.

### Dental Health and Pregnancy

Visiting the dentist for a regular visit while pregnant is important and there is no risk in doing so. However, if you are needing more serious dental work during your pregnancy, you should discuss a plan of action with your dentist and doctor.

During pregnancy, your body experiences many changes. Hormonal changes during pregnancy may leave you tired and moody, but it can also impact your oral health. For example, the cravings you experience during pregnancy may lead you to eat more sugary snacks. [These sweets leave your teeth more vulnerable to tooth decay.](#) Choosing healthier snacks like fruits and veggies to manage your cravings is better for your oral and overall health.

If you experience morning sickness, you are exposed to more acid which can [eat away the enamel protecting our teeth.](#) Rinse your mouth with water afterward to help wash away the acid and keep it from causing any problems with your teeth.

Additionally, any change you experience as a result from hormones may increase blood flow to your gum tissue. This increased blood flow may cause sensitivity, bleeding, or swollen gums, and is called '[pregnancy gingivitis.](#)' Because of this, it is even more important to maintain good oral health habits. Discuss any increased sensitivity or bleeding while brushing with your dentist to determine the best dental health care routine for you.

Looking for a dentist in your area? [Click here.](#)

### Vision Health and Pregnancy

Hormonal changes can also [impact vision health.](#) Any changes in vision should be discussed with your eye doctor. Some changes may require an update to your prescription while others can be delayed until after pregnancy. Blurred vision and headaches may be [a sign of high blood pressure,](#) so any sign of this combination of symptoms should be reported to your doctor.

Looking for a vision doctor in your area? [Click here.](#)

### A Happy and Healthy Pregnancy

Ultimately, maintaining a healthy pregnancy requires maintaining healthy routines while pregnant which includes taking care of your dental, vision and overall health. Pregnant moms may consider following these tips from [the American Pregnancy Association](#) and [the American Dental Association](#) for the best ways to stay healthy during pregnancy.

- Get plenty of rest, exercise, and water every day. Be sure to [eat a balanced diet](#) not only during pregnancy, but also during your time as a new mom.
- Brush and floss as usual during pregnancy.
- After adjusting to the news of your new baby, give your dentist and your eye doctor a call to let them know. At this time, your dentist and eye doctor will likely recommend you to schedule preventive exams and other routine care appointments.
- Healthy circulation is important while you sit in the chair at your dentist or eye doctor's office. Maintain good circulation by keeping your legs uncrossed.
- Bring a pillow along to help keep you and baby more comfortable during your appointment!
- Lower stress during these appointments by bringing along headphones to play your favorite music to relax you and baby.

Pregnancy means an exciting new beginning and even after baby arrives, taking care of yourself is incredibly important during this new, exciting journey. Don't let baby preparation overshadow the need for you to maintain your dental, vision, and overall health. Being a healthy mom can allow you to better adjust to life with your new bundle of joy.

## The Reality: The Winter Blues are a Real Thing.

### Blog Writing

Cold temperatures and less sunlight during the day keep us inside more in the winter and for many people these changes can cause a significant change in their mood. Often playfully called 'the winter blues,' gloominess starting in late fall and through the cold winter is not unusual, but when this sadness is affecting many aspects of your life, you may be experiencing a more serious case of the winter blues.

[Seasonal affective disorder \(SAD\)](#) refers to a type of depression that is associated with the change in seasons. [SAD affects around six percent of Americans](#) and is characterized by the change in mood from the change in weather where those suffering experience typical depression symptoms like low energy, loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities, trouble sleeping and even feeling hopeless throughout the winter, even intensifying as the season progresses. [SAD is more common among women and young adults ages eighteen to thirty and varies across regions in the United States where rates are higher among the northern border of the U.S. than the southern border.](#)

SAD is much more complicated than wanting to stay inside during a blizzard, and if you notice that your sadness impacts your relationships or work life, you could be suffering with SAD. Not everyone who feels sadness during the colder months experience SAD, but when your symptoms start to diminish your quality of life, consider seeking professional help from your doctor.

But we have good news! There are a variety of treatments that may help lighten the load of the symptoms you are experiencing for both people experiencing the winter blues and SAD.

- **Sunlight:** Getting outside when the sun is out during the winter months is important. Maybe you cannot spend as much time outside, but actively planning and seeking time outside when possible can help boost your mood by just exposing yourself to natural light. Consider taking a quick walk or exploring winter outdoor activity like ice skating or skiing to get yourself out in the sun even during the colder part of the year.
- **Exercise:** There is consistent research that suggests exercise positively influences mental health. This natural treatment is our body's way of increasing the hormones that affect mood like serotonin and endorphins. Regularly exercising throughout the winter can be a big mood boost for many people.
- **Healthy lifestyle:** Balancing hormones through a regular, healthy schedule is another way to regulate your mood whether you're experiencing SAD or the winter blues. Consider going to bed and waking up at the same time every day and structuring your meal times for around the same time every day. Taking care of your physical and social health by eating healthy and making time for family, friends, and activities you enjoy is

another important step in keeping a healthy schedule to maintain your mood during the winter.

Please note: these tips do not replace the expert opinion of a doctor. Do not ignore your symptoms and seek help from a professional if your change in mood and motivation is more serious than you can handle with tricks like these. With help from a doctor, you can combine therapy or medication to complement with tips like these to manage your mood.

Whether you are a part of the [fourteen percent of Americans who experience winter blues](#) or apart of the six percent experiencing SAD, it's not unusual to feel this way and there are important steps you can take to maintain your mood and motivation through the long winter months. Ultimately, this seasonal sadness is something worth discussing with your doctor to decide which treatments or lifestyles would be best for you to manage your mood.

## The Best Way to Fuel Summer Fun

### Blog Writing

Summer provides opportunities for kids to be active as they participate in all things that make summer fun, including sports and camps. The hot summer sun and the nature of being more active means we have to remember to rehydrate to keep our bodies healthy. The ultimate rehydration drink is water. Even though sports drinks are promoted as the ideal fuel after exercise and activity, are these sports drinks really the best way to fuel our summer fun?

Marketing around sports drinks emphasizes the ability of these drinks to rehydrate, and replenish the carbohydrates and electrolytes we lose during exercise. Studies show that sports drinks can be great for serious athletes who truly exercise enough to need the replenishment that sports drinks can offer. However, the majority of people drinking these sports drinks are not as physically active as they should be, according to a [Berkeley study](#).

In reality, sports drinks are full of sugar. A 32-ounce sports drink can contain a whopping 200 calories and 16 teaspoons of sugar, that's just about the same amount of sugar that is in a 20-ounce soda! On top of that, artificial colorings and sugars are added into these sports drinks. According to the Berkeley study, these extra sugars may be contributing to the growing epidemic of child obesity in the United State. The researchers at Berkeley also believe that sports drink companies may be providing misleading labels and marketing which suggest the drinks have incredible health benefits. The jury is still out on the science behind these claims.

In essence, sports drinks may not be the best drink to fuel your child as they head off to sports practice and summer camps. The better option to fuel summer fun? Fruits, vegetables, and water. Fruits and vegetables are an excellent, natural way for your child to replenish carbohydrates and electrolytes. Water is a great choice for rehydration as it is essential for the health of our bodies, including our oral health. In addition to fueling the body, it [helps wash away cavity-causing bacteria](#), something that sugary sports drinks cannot do.

So, skip the sports drink and keep your summer fuel simple with water, fruits, and vegetables!

## Your Perfect Morning Routine

### Blog Writing

As we say goodbye to summer, it doesn't mean that your health routine goes into hibernation. With the new season, it can also mean the start of a new healthy routine to power you through fall and winter. Taking care of yourself starts the moment you wake up and it's important to gear yourself up for the shorter days and cooler temps ahead by designing your perfect morning routine.

Here are some tips and tricks you should consider when redesigning the morning routine that motivates you through colder seasons ahead.

**1. Give yourself time.**

Starting your day off rushed can make the whole day feel rushed. Be sure to provide yourself plenty of time to prepare for the day and actually enjoy your morning instead of hitting snooze too much. At first getting up early can be tough, but soon enough the earlier rise-and-shine time won't even bother you.

**2. Eat a good breakfast.**

Of course you've heard that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. So treat it that way by actually planning to eat a good, filling breakfast every morning. Need ideas? [Check out some healthy options for the most important meal of the day.](#)

**3. Stay away from screens.**

We've all done it; rolling over and immediately checking and rechecking our phone until we realize we have wasted thirty minutes just scrolling. That's time away from the healthy habits in your routine that you are working towards. Avoid the endless scroll in the morning by setting your phone away from your bed.

This also applies to computers. You have all day to work, don't take time away from your morning by opening your computer to check emails or start on a project for work. It sucks time away from your morning and makes the work day seem that much longer.

**4. Drink a full glass of water.**

Six to eight hours of sleeping means our bodies wake up dehydrated. Drinking a tall glass of water early in the morning helps to rehydrate your body and will even help you feel more alert! (Dehydration is a common cause of feeling tired.)

**5. Enjoy your morning beverage.**

Whether it's hot tea or coffee, there is no need to cut your essential morning beverage out of your routine. Coffee and tea can be a great energy boost to start your day. Taking the time to drink and actually enjoy your morning caffeine will give you added peace of mind to start your morning.

**6. Stretch.**

It's natural to want to stretch after you wake up. Listen to your body and stretch! Stretching in the morning relieves any tension from sleeping and it also "[helps relieve stress, anxiety, improve digestion, soothe headaches and improve your overall health.](#)"

**7. Brush your teeth.**

Wash away your sleep by brushing your teeth to get rid of morning breath. A clean mouth and fresh breath help you feel good about yourself. Commit to brushing your teeth well every morning to start your day and your smile right.

**8. Make your bed.**

It's easy to decide not to make your bed in the morning because "it's just going to get messed up again." But making your bed is the small accomplishment that will set the tone

for the rest of the day. Think of it as a task on your to do list; it's only morning and you've already got something crossed off your list! Added bonus: you will feel more guilty crawling back into bed if you have already made it!

While you can find endless morning routine ideas online, your best morning routine is one that works for you. Play around with some of these ideas until you find the perfect combination that suits you and make it your daily morning routine to power you through the cold months ahead.

# Apple Cider Vinegar: What's the deal with this new trend?

## Blog Writing

A new health trend has emerged and is growing in popularity. If weight loss, reduced cholesterol or lower blood sugar are a part of your new year's resolution, maybe you have seen the articles raving over the health benefits of apple cider vinegar. Different sources have different suggestions of how to integrate apple cider vinegar into your health routine, but the reality is that this substance poses a threat to your oral health if the proper precautions are not taken.

### What exactly is apple cider vinegar?

Apple cider vinegar comes from the sugar in apples which are fermented into the acidic apple cider vinegar. It is traditionally used to [clean and disinfect, and it also can be used to preserve your food.](#)

Aside from its traditional uses, there are several possible health benefits associated with it including evidence which suggests it can help people feel fuller and therefore, [eat less and lose weight.](#) There are also reports that the [bacteria-killing liquid can help with acne and can be helpful in managing lower blood sugar levels.](#)

### How is it used?

The health fanatics praising the benefits have different suggestions for incorporating apple cider vinegar into your diet. A common suggestion is to drink it, at least everyday or sometimes even before every meal, but this regular consumption of the acidic vinegar can cause harm to the enamel on your teeth. [Others may suggest using apple cider vinegar as mouthwash, but this is one way you should absolutely not use it for the sake of your teeth's health. You should also never drink apple cider vinegar directly from the bottle.](#)

### Apple Cider Vinegar and Your Oral Health

[Weakened enamel caused by the acidity of apple cider vinegar leaves your teeth more vulnerable to cavities and tooth decay.](#) However, with the proper precautions, you can still consume apple cider vinegar without putting your oral health at risk. Diluting the vinegar with water is an effective way to better protect your mouth. [Recommended dilution is using five parts water for each part vinegar.](#) You may also consider drinking your concoction through a straw, even further minimizing contact with your teeth. You can use straws guilt-free by investing in [a reusable straw](#) to protect your teeth and the environment.

Rinsing your mouth with water after drinking an acidic drink is also a good idea. This helps to wash away any remaining acid on your teeth to keep it from causing problems. Brushing your teeth after drinking apple cider vinegar is another great way to protect your teeth, but remember, you should wait at least thirty minutes after drinking it to brush.

[You may also consider using apple cider vinegar in different ways like within your cooking or as dressing to prevent direct contact with your enamel.](#) Apple cider vinegar is also available in pill form which is the best method of protecting your teeth while regularly consuming apple cider vinegar.

Even with this dental precautions, the evidence is still up in the air about the extent how good apple cider vinegar is for you. It's not a miracle cure-all like some may believe, but there is reason to believe it is healthy, as long as you are careful in taking the proper steps to protect your teeth.

<https://www.pittsforddentist.com/pde-news/will-apple-cider-vinegar-harm-teeth/>

[https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/6-proven-health-benefits-of-apple-cider-vinegar - section2](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/6-proven-health-benefits-of-apple-cider-vinegar-section2)

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/voraciously/wp/2018/09/11/from-our-lips-to-your-ears-we-tested-8-reusable-straws-to-determine-which-is-the-best/?noredirect=on>

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So, skip the sports drink and keep your summer fuel simple with water, fruits, and vegetables!

Internal Communications Copy for IT Summer Safety Series

### *USBe Safe!*

USBs and other removable media can be an easy solution for sharing data, but that also makes it easy for hackers to access our information!

**Just how can they hack me with a tiny flash drive?**

Expert hackers will often leave USBs in the parking lots of company buildings in hopes an employee will pick it up, plug it in, and provide them access to sensitive information. **If you ever find a USB or other suspicious technology in the parking lot, DO NOT PLUG IT INTO A MACHINE and report it immediately to the Technology department.**

What is considered removable media?

Removable Media is any type of storage device that can be removed from a computer and inserted into another computer to move data and information. This includes...

- USBs
- CDs
- DVDs
- Memory cards

Removable Media Policy and Sharing Sensitive Information

***It is our policy at Delta Dental of Iowa to avoid using removable media***, as it is easy to lose these devices. **Any use of removable media must be approved by an officer of Delta Dental of Iowa.** When approval is given, the information must be encrypted and password protected. If you lose a removable device that included confidential information, this must be reported to the Compliance Department.

**Need an acceptable way to share sensitive information?**

- Send a secure email by adding #Secure# into the subject line.
- Large files can be shared through our FTP server, just ask the Technology Department how!

Have more questions? Contact the Technology Department for more information.

Internal Communication Copy for Mr. Blank Day

**Subject:** SURPRISE, tomorrow's coffee is on us!

Surprise, we are treating our employees to free coffee in spirit of Mr. Blank Day, a celebration of the giving nature of the Blank family. Delta Dental celebrated alongside UnityPoint and the Blank Children's Hospital on Monday, July 15<sup>th</sup> by providing free coffee and spreading smiles with the Tooth Fairy at Blank Children's hospital. In spirit of giving back like Mr. Blank, Grounds for Celebration will be available for employees to stop by and get a free cup of joe tomorrow morning! Stop by the truck between **7:30am-11:00am and** enjoy your morning coffee on us! A

limited selection of coffee will be available. Thanks for all you do to spread smiles and improve lives of lowans across the state!

Menu:

- Regular coffee
- Flavored Coffee
- Cappuccino
- Latte
- Mocha
- Americano
- Breve
- Hot Chocolate
- Chai Latte

**Subject:** Don't forget: your coffee is on us today!

In celebration of Mr. Blank Day, we are providing all employees with free coffee today from Grounds for Celebration coffee truck. Stop by from **7:00am-11:00am** for your free cup of joe and enjoy a little gift of appreciation from Delta Dental! Thanks for spreading smiles and improving lives of the people we serve each day!