

# grin!®

## LET'S GO FISHING

Common and not-so-common causes  
**FOR GUM RECESSION**

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**URGENT ORAL HEALTH ISSUES**  
and how to react

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**A SMILE SUCCESS STORY:**  
School sealant programs





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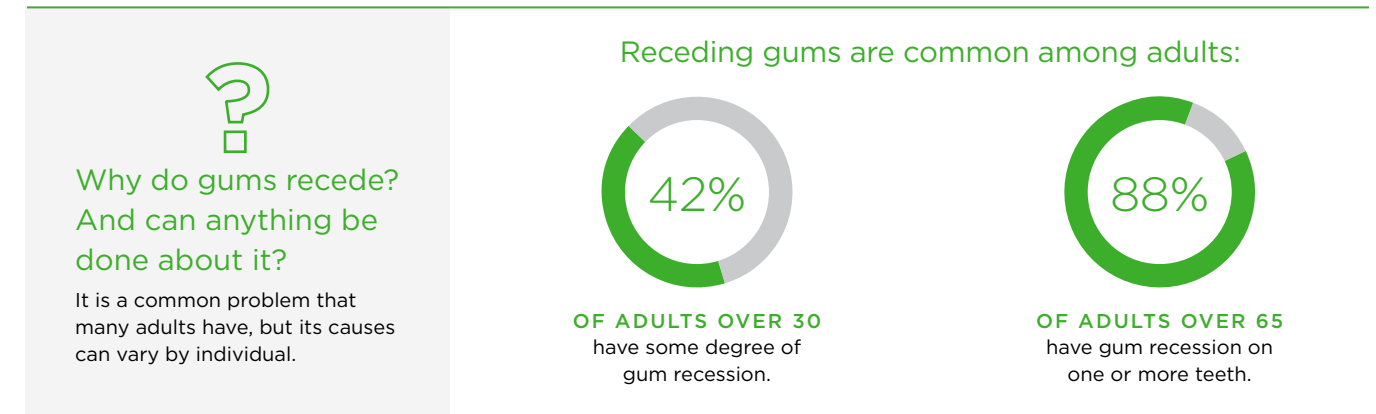
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# Common and not-so-common CAUSES FOR GUM RECESSION



Gum recession is when the gum tissue pulls back from the teeth, exposing the root surfaces. Root exposure can make your teeth more sensitive and increase your risk for oral health problems such as tooth decay.



**Why do gums recede?**  
There's usually no single reason for receding gums. Instead, it's likely to be caused by a combination of one or more risk factors such as:

- Gum disease** (periodontal disease)
- Brushing too hard** or too often
- Tobacco** products or vaping
- Not brushing** and flossing daily
- Family genetics** include a higher-than-normal risk

In addition to these common causes, gum recession can also stem from seemingly unrelated issues such as:

- Teeth grinding** (bruxism) isn't just bad for your teeth and jaw joints — habitual grinding or clenching puts pressure on your gums
- Abnormal tooth positioning** (misalignment) can also put pressure on your gums and trigger recession
- Hormonal changes** in women due to pregnancy and menopause
- Trauma, physical injury, and even lip and tongue piercings** can rub against your teeth and gums, causing damage and recession

**How do I fix receding gums?**

Your gum tissue can't grow back after it recedes, but you can stop the problem from getting worse. That's why it's important to visit your dentist for evaluation and treatment if you are worried about your gumline.

**How can I prevent gum recession?**

If you don't currently have gum recession, that's great! Do your part to keep your smile healthy with a strong oral health routine — brush your teeth twice daily with a fluoride toothpaste, floss daily, and visit your dentist for routine preventive checkups.



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# urgent oral health issues AND HOW TO REACT

Dental emergencies can happen when we least expect them, whether it's a sudden toothache, a chipped tooth, or a lost filling. But don't worry. By taking the proper steps and preparing in advance, you can confidently tackle common dental emergencies to keep your smile healthy and safe.

## HOW TO PREPARE FOR A DENTAL EMERGENCY

- 1 Keep your dentist's contact information handy.
- 2 Make sure you have a dental benefits plan to assist with the cost of treatment.
- 3 Brush your teeth twice daily with a fluoride toothpaste for two minutes at a time.
- 4 Clean between your teeth daily with floss to prevent cavities and gum disease.
- 5 Visit the dentist for regularly scheduled preventive checkups to keep your oral health strong before an emergency occurs.

## HERE ARE FIVE COMMON URGENT ORAL HEALTH ISSUES ALONG WITH SIMPLE STEPS TO MANAGE THEM SMOOTHLY AND SAFELY.



### LOST FILLING

If your filling feels loose or falls out, call your dentist to schedule an appointment, and to discuss short-term treatment for any pain you're experiencing. If you can locate your filling, store it safely and bring it to your appointment. In the meantime, it can help to:

- 1 Gargle with mouthwash or salt water to keep the area clean
- 2 Avoid chewing on the exposed tooth
- 3 Brush the area gently during your daily dental routine



### TOOTHACHE

If your teeth become sensitive, or you experience pain when pressure is applied to your tooth or jaw, you may be experiencing a toothache. To relieve pain from a minor toothache:

- 1 Take an over-the-counter pain reliever
- 2 Avoid overly hot or cold foods
- 3 Apply a cold compress on your cheek to reduce swelling, if any

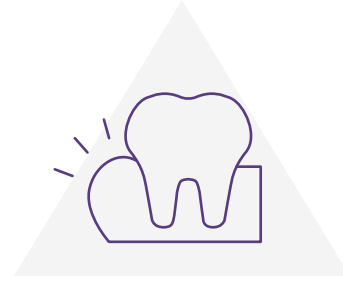
If you have a severe toothache, swelling in your jaw, or experience symptoms that last longer than two days, you should contact your dentist as soon as possible for an accurate diagnosis.



### CHIPPED TOOTH

Whether you chip a tooth playing a sport or bite down a little too hard on something crunchy, it's important to visit your dentist as soon as possible, so they can help you prevent any further damage or infection. But while you're still at home, you can try to reduce any discomfort and infection risk:

- 1 Rinse your mouth with salt water
- 2 Take over-the-counter pain relievers
- 3 Eat soft foods to avoid further damage
- 4 Cover sharp edges with orthodontic wax to prevent cuts



### GUM INJURY

From sports injuries to hot pizza burns, most gum injuries heal within a few days with home remedies like saltwater rinses, cold compresses, and over-the-counter pain relievers.

However, some gum injuries can be more painful, persistent, and/or prone to bleeding. If symptoms worsen or don't improve within one to two days, visit your dentist as soon as possible.



### JAW PAIN

Jaw pain can stem from an injury or from dental issues:

- Cavities, gum disease, and abscessed teeth can cause infections that spread to the jaw
- Teeth grinding or misaligned teeth can strain the jaw joint

To relieve this pain, try applying heat or cold compresses and eating softer foods. If jaw pain lasts over a week or gets worse, contact your dentist for treatment.





## Carrots

It looks like Bugs Bunny had it right all along. Carrots are a nutritious and delicious way to support your health! They provide vitamin C and calcium for healthy gums and strong teeth. They're also rich in beta-carotene, which your body turns into vitamin A — a vital nutrient for vision health.



May lower cholesterol levels to improve cardiovascular health.



Contain fiber to support proper digestion.



Provide antioxidants and vitamin A for healthier skin.



### Zucchini carrot bread

No one will know this lightly sweet loaf is loaded with extra veggies that are a bonus for your taste buds and your health.

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup unsweetened applesauce
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup shredded carrots
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup shredded peeled zucchini
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup orange juice
- Optional:  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup walnuts

#### DIRECTIONS:

- 1 Preheat oven to 350°F.
- 2 Combine the first 8 ingredients in a bowl.
- 3 Mix flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in small bowl.
- 4 Gradually mix the dry ingredients into the carrot and zucchini mixture, adding orange juice as you go.
- 5 Pour into 2 greased and floured 8x4-inch loaf pans.
- 6 Bake until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, about 45 minutes.
- 7 Cool for 10 minutes; remove from pans to a wire rack to cool completely.
- 8 Enjoy!



### Carrot smoothie

A little sweet and a whole lot of healthy, this smoothie is a perfect anytime pick-me-up.

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup orange juice
- 1 medium banana
- 1 cup frozen carrots
- 1 cup frozen mango chunks
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup Greek yogurt (or 1 scoop of protein powder)

#### DIRECTIONS:

- 1 Add orange juice, banana, carrots, mango, and Greek yogurt (or protein powder) to the blender. *Note: Add ice if carrots and mango are thawed.*
- 2 Blend until smooth.
- 3 That's it! Serve and enjoy.





# LET'S GO FISHING



The United States is home to a diverse array of fish species, making it a prime destination for fishing enthusiasts. Fishing is not just an enjoyable outdoor activity — the fish you catch are also packed with essential nutrients that benefit your oral, vision, and overall health.

## SO, HOW ABOUT IT? LET'S GO FISHING!

### Hooked on Chinook salmon

**WHERE IS IT FOUND?**  
The west coast, from Alaska to central California.

**WHEN IS IT IN SEASON?**  
Mid-summer to early fall.

**WHAT DOES IT TASTE LIKE?**  
A buttery and somewhat sweet flavor with a slightly firm texture.

### No trout about it

**WHERE IS IT FOUND?**  
There are many different species found in freshwater streams, rivers, creeks, ponds, and lakes.

**WHEN IS IT IN SEASON?**  
Year-round, but especially late spring and summer.

**WHAT DOES IT TASTE LIKE?**  
A mild, slightly nutty flavor with a tender, flaky texture.

### Catfish you can trust

**WHERE IS IT FOUND?**  
Near the bottom of rivers, lakes, ponds, and streams in the New England region and the southeast United States.

**WHEN IS IT IN SEASON?**  
Year-round, but especially late spring and summer.

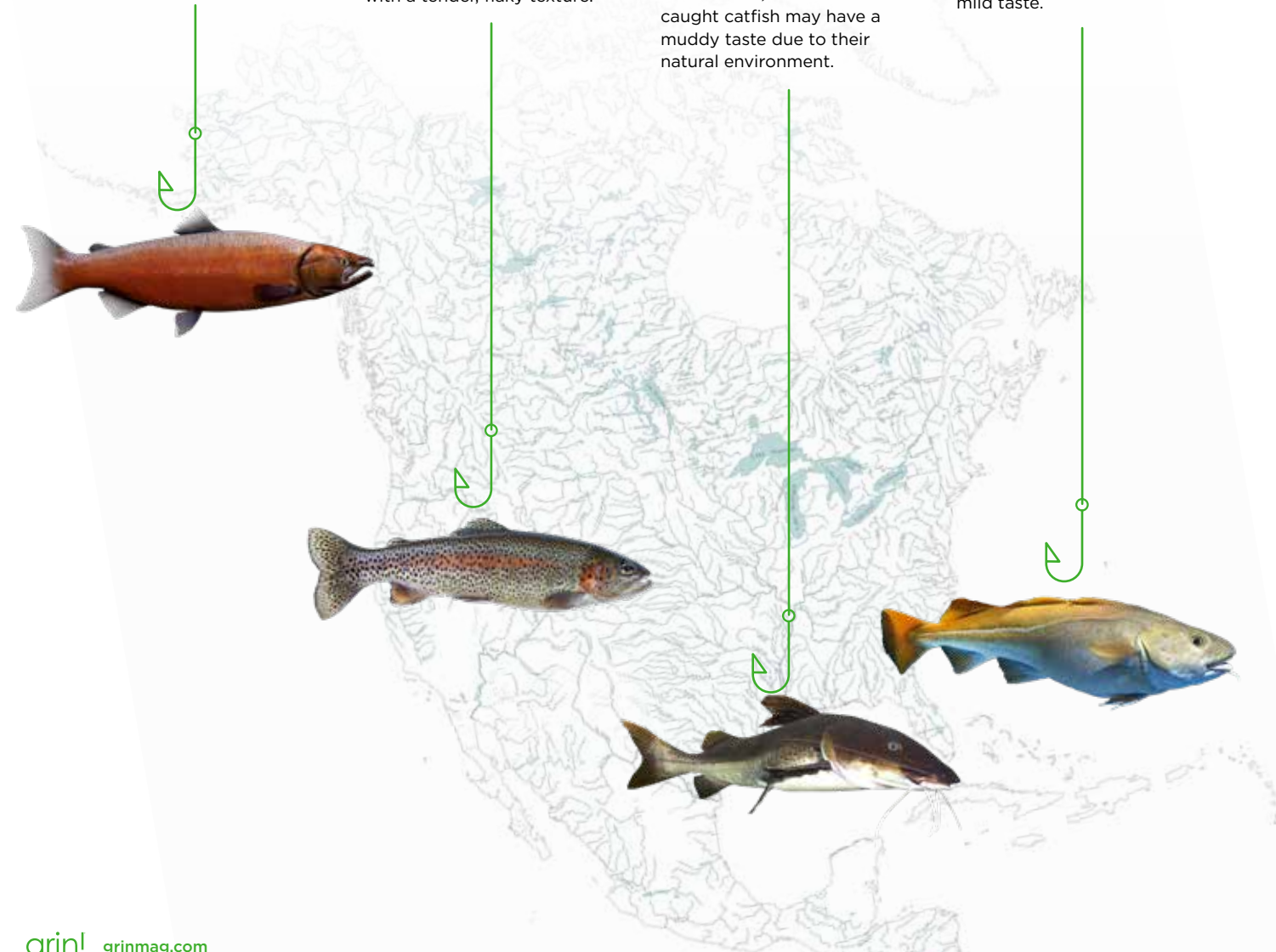
**WHAT DOES IT TASTE LIKE?**  
Farmed catfish has a mild, sweet flavor, while wild-caught catfish may have a muddy taste due to their natural environment.

### Grab a rod and catch some cod

**WHERE IS IT FOUND?**  
The northern Atlantic Ocean.

**WHEN IS IT IN SEASON?**  
Year-round, but especially late fall to early spring.









**WHAT DOES IT TASTE LIKE?**  
A less "fishy" tasting fish, cod is flaky, white, tender, and slightly sweet with a mild taste.





# REEL IN BIG HEALTH BENEFITS

The table below is just a small sample of the powerful health benefits you can receive if you add more fish to your diet.

 <p><b>NUTRITION</b></p>	 <p><b>DENTAL AND VISION BENEFITS</b></p>	 <p><b>FOUND IN</b></p>
<p>Omega-3 fatty acids</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce inflammation to prevent gum disease</li> <li>• Lower risk for age-related macular degeneration, a common eye condition</li> </ul>	
<p>Phosphorus*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps your body absorb calcium for strong teeth and bones</li> <li>• Supports healthy gums</li> </ul>	
<p>Protein</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports strong teeth and gums</li> <li>• Strengthens and repairs muscle tissue</li> <li>• Protects heart health</li> </ul>	
<p>Vitamin B12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowers likelihood of sore tongue, mouth ulcers, and gum disease</li> <li>• Maintains the health of your optic nerve and reduces risk for vision loss</li> </ul>	
<p>Vitamin D</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduces risk for tooth decay and bleeding gums</li> <li>• Reduces risk for dry eyes and cataracts (hazy or cloudy vision)</li> <li>• Important for heart health</li> </ul>	



### Ready to catch some fish?

To find a good spot and make sure you have the right gear, look up local fishing associations or a nearby tourism office and ask for a guide. They can help you get started!

\*Phosphorus can cause health issues if it is overconsumed.

## A SMILE SUCCESS STORY: School sealant programs



Ready for some good news? We're pleased to report that school sealant programs do work — they help keep children healthy and smiling.

### Here's what you need to know:

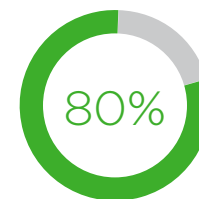
- ✓ Dental sealants are recommended for permanent molar teeth.
- ✓ They are thin coatings, applied to the chewing surfaces of back teeth, that greatly reduce cavity risk.
- ✓ School sealant programs exist to provide these vital treatments to children who might not have access to regular dental care due to financial or geographic barriers.

### How school sealant programs work:

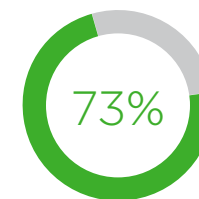
- 1 By applying sealants on site at local schools, these programs reduce the risk of cavities for elementary and middle school students in underserved or remote communities.
- 2 School sealant programs often focus on neighborhoods and communities that are at a higher risk for tooth decay due to factors like socioeconomic status, lack of dental insurance, or limited access to care.
- 3 Funding school sealant programs comes from charitable organizations, community groups, Delta Dental member companies, and individual people like you — everyone working together to keep kids healthy.

### The statistics are in: School sealant programs work

Of course, the big question is whether these programs are effective — and we are happy to report that yes, they are!



**REDUCED CAVITIES IN THE MOLAR TEETH** for up to two years.



of 15-year-olds have still **NOT RECEIVED SEALANTS ON THEIR ADULT MOLARS.**



Most dental plans, including Delta Dental's, cover dental sealants at no cost for children. This makes it easier for families to access affordable care to protect their children's teeth.



### A simple solution with big results

School sealant programs play an essential role in preventing dental decay and improving the oral health of children, especially those from underserved communities. With continued support and funding, including from Delta Dental member companies, these programs can help more children build a foundation for lifelong dental health.





# CELEBRATE SPRING WITH A SCAVENGER HUNT

Spring is here, and it's the perfect time to step outside and enjoy the fresh air, longer days, and the beauty of nature all around you. Whether you're taking a long hike or simply strolling around your neighborhood, a scavenger hunt can help you connect with your surroundings and improve your oral and overall health.



## LET THE HUNT BEGIN

Here's a list of some things you might find while walking through your local park, neighborhood, and in some cases, even your own backyard.

Each one has its own health benefits, whether they're supporting your smile, boosting your vision, or both! But make sure you don't eat any of the food items you find outside. Just use them for inspiration the next time you visit the grocery store!



**Blooming flowers**  
Stopping to smell the roses does more than boost your mood — it can also improve your oral health. When you reduce your stress level, you're less likely to grind your teeth or forget to brush.



**Wild berries**  
Blackberries and cranberries protect your teeth from a strand of bacteria that speeds up tooth decay, while strawberries have vitamin C to strengthen gums and shield your eyes from damaging UV rays.



Don't forget to stay hydrated while you're having fun! Water makes dry mouth less likely, washes away bacteria, and helps prevent dry eyes! Just make sure you bring your own water source — rivers, lakes, and streams may contain bacteria or viruses that aren't safe to drink.



**Mushrooms**  
Don't eat mushrooms you find in the wild, but you should enjoy them from the store. They are rich in vitamin D, which helps your body absorb calcium for healthy teeth and bones and reduces risk for dry eyes.



**Acorns**  
These nuts are not eaten raw (unless you're a squirrel!), but when cooked they provide potassium, which reduces glaucoma risk, and vitamin A, which helps with saliva production and shields teeth from bacteria.



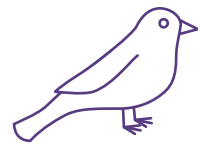
**Squirrels**  
Squirrels have hard, thick front teeth that help them crack open hard nuts and acorns. Your teeth aren't as strong — be careful when eating nuts, seeds, popcorn, and other hard foods that might crack your teeth.







If you plan to be outside for a long time or during peak sunlight hours, make sure you protect your skin and lips with sunscreen and lip balm that has at least SPF 30. Also, be sure to protect your eyes from harsh light and UV rays with a pair of polarized sunglasses.



**Birds**  
The return of our feathered, warm weather friends is one of the best parts of spring! And while you should leave their eggs and nest alone, remember that eggs are packed with nutrition — including protein and vitamins A and D to support healthy eyes, gums, and teeth.



**Four-leaf clover**  
This doesn't improve your oral health — it's just good luck!



**Go ahead, explore a little**  
A spring scavenger hunt is a fun and easy way to engage with nature. As you explore blooming flowers, watch birds, and feel the breeze, you're also creating oral and overall health benefits. So, grab your scavenger list and enjoy the beautiful season!



## ESTIMATE, PLAN, SMILE!

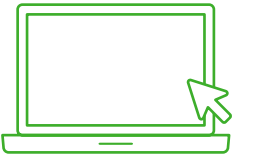
### How to use Delta Dental's cost estimator the easy way



Planning for dental care? Delta Dental's cost estimator is a great tool to get a general idea of what you might pay for different procedures. Follow these simple steps to get an accurate estimate and prepare for your dental treatment with confidence.



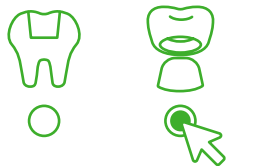
**Access the Cost Estimator**  
Simply visit [deltadental.com](http://deltadental.com) to find the Delta Dental Cost Estimator — you'll find it right at the top of the home page.



**Enter your location**  
Input your ZIP code to find typical treatment costs for your area. This gives you a general idea of pricing before scheduling an appointment.



**Select your procedure**  
Choose the dental service you need. This includes routine exams, cleanings, fillings, root canals, crowns, extractions, and more. The tool will display an estimated cost range for services based on local averages.



**Confirm with your dentist**  
For the most precise estimate, speak with your dentist. They can review your specific Delta Dental plan, verify coverage, submit a pre-treatment estimate, and provide a detailed breakdown of your costs.



**Save more with in-network dentists**  
You can also use the Find a Dentist tool on the home page of [deltadental.com](http://deltadental.com) to find an in-network dentist. Visiting a Delta Dental in-network provider can lower your costs significantly! That's because in-network dentists provide dental care at discounted rates for members.



If you're considering a dental treatment, there's no need to wonder about the cost. Use our online cost estimator to get a better idea and talk to your dentist about the specifics.

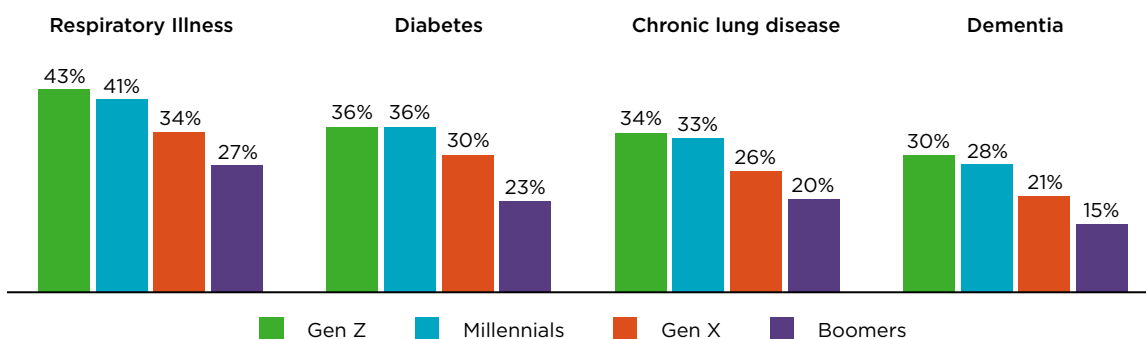


# The State of America's Oral Health and Wellness

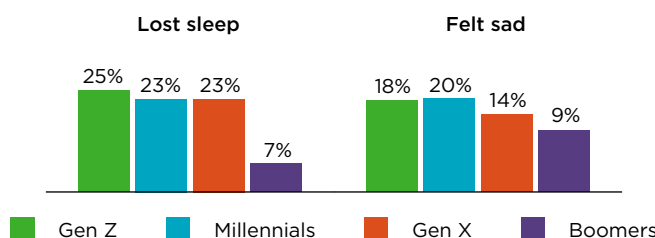
How well do you understand the connection between your oral health and your overall health? Surprisingly enough, your answer may depend on your age!

## GENERATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Percentage of adults who understand the connection between oral health and specific health conditions.

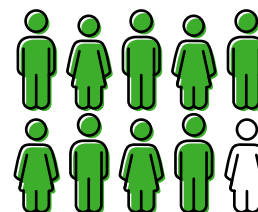


This generational divide also shows that younger adults are more likely to lose sleep or feel sad if they have dental problems.



### Adults agree that oral health matters

More than 9 out of 10 adults believe that a dental visit is just as important as an annual physical. And that's a great reason to smile!



## HOW DO AMERICANS FEEL ABOUT ORAL HEALTH?

Find more up-to-date insights about consumer behaviors relating to oral health and download the full report at [deltadental.com](http://deltadental.com).