



Health & Wellness Update

July 2024



July National Health Observance: Summer Safety and Dental Health Awareness Month

July's health observances are Summer Safety and Dental Health Awareness Month. Looking for educational information related to this topic? If so, check out the following UnitedHealthcare educational resources:



[Skin care conditions, tips and treatments](#)

[Sun safety](#)

[Dental and oral health](#)

[Dental problems and oral health care](#)

[Click here to learn more](#)

United at Work Presentation of the Month:

Healthier Dental Habits



Regular dental hygiene translates to good health overall. In addition to reviewing the importance of healthy and regular dental habits, members will learn common health conditions and diseases associated with poor dental habits, and learn healthier behaviors that may help manage, improve, and prevent poor oral care.

[Click here for the Healthier dental habits presentation.](#)

[Click here to learn more](#)

Healthy tip flier of the month.

Healthier Dental Habits

Health tip: Healthier Dental Habits

Due to water fluoridation and fluoride toothpaste, the baby boomer generation is the first to keep their natural teeth over their entire lifetime. However, threats to oral health, including tooth loss, poses a risk to all generations. Poor dental hygiene is correlated with several other diseases not directly in the mouth, including diabetes, heart disease, pneumonia and rheumatoid arthritis.



A healthier mouth for a lifetime includes:³

- Regular dental visits
- Brush twice a day for at least 2 minutes
- Floss once a day
- Do not use tobacco products
- Limit sugary and alcoholic beverages

Brushing is probably the most obvious mouth hygiene component. It's recommended that you brush your teeth twice a day for at least 2 minutes. Gently brush back and forth in short strokes. Be sure to brush outer, inner, and chewing surfaces of the teeth and the tongue. It is a good idea to replace your toothbrush every 3-4 months.



Other ways to maintain good oral hygiene:³

- Proper nutrition
- Drink plenty of water
- Limit the number of snacks you eat
- Eat a variety of foods from each of the five major food groups, including:
 - whole grains
 - lean sources of protein
 - fruits
 - low-fat/fat-free dairy foods
 - vegetables



Did you know?

- 26% of adults in the United States have tooth decay¹
- 46% of adults aged 30 years & older have signs of gum disease¹
- Oral cancers are more common in older people, particularly those who drink and/or smoke²
- Besides brushing, there are other tools to keep your mouth healthy like flossing and using mouthwash¹

Sources:

¹Centers for Disease Control. <https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/basics/adult-oral-health/index.html> 2020. Accessed on August 2022

²American Cancer Society. <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/oral-cavity-and-oropharyngeal-cancer/about/key-statistics.html>. 2022. Accessed August 2022

³American Dental Association. <https://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/az-topics/b/brushing-your-teeth>. 2022. Accessed August 2022.

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Click [here](#) for more tips on Healthier dental habits.

En [Español](#)

[Click here to learn more tips](#)

Sources: ¹Centers for Disease Control. <https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/basics/adult-oral-health/index.html> 2020. Accessed on August 2022

²American Cancer Society. <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/oral-cavity-and-oropharyngeal-cancer/about/key-statistics.html>. 2022. Accessed August 2022

³American Dental Association. <https://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/az-topics/b/brushing-your-teeth>. 2022. Accessed August 2022.

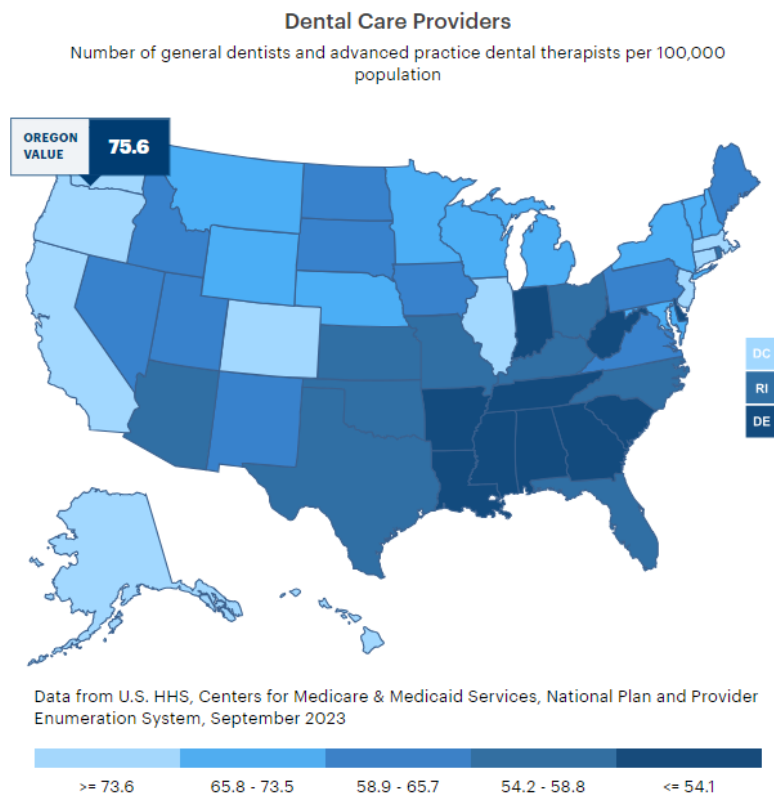
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Research corner: Dental Care Providers



Why does this matter?

Despite projections of steady growth in the number of working dentists, the Health Resources and Services Administration has identified many



areas and populations in the United States that have an inadequate supply of dentists to meet current or future needs. In addition to diagnosing, treating or managing oral health conditions and performing surgical procedures, dentists provide critical preventive care through routine visits. Poor oral health can negatively impact quality of life, causing pain or tooth loss, and contributing to other health conditions like eating disorders, diabetes and immune disorders. More than 40% of adults reported feeling mouth pain in the past year, and 80% of people have had at least one cavity by age 34.

Dental Care Providers

U.S. Value: 64.6

Top State: Alaska: #1 96.8

Bottom State: Delaware: #50 40.5

Definition: Number of general dentists and advanced practice dental therapists per 100,000 population.

Who is affected?

Some of the most significant oral health disparities are in rural communities, which report lower access to and use of dental services and have higher rates of dental problems. Contributing factors to these disparities include:

- An inadequate supply of dentists.
- Higher uninsurance rates and fewer dentists accepting Medicaid patients.
- Patient difficulty in traveling to a dentist.
- Poverty.
- Lack of a fluoridated community water supply.
- A growing population of older adults.

What works?

Strategies to increase the size of dental workforce, particularly in rural communities, include:

- Expanding the roles of dental therapists, hygienists and assistants.
- Training general/family practice physicians and primary care providers to conduct oral health exams and place fluoride varnish/sealants on children.
- Establishing dental mobile units for outreach services.
- Implementing teledentistry services where possible.
- Offering educational loan repayment and other incentives for dentists who choose to work in rural areas.
- Expanding dental school and residency programs in rural areas and targeting in-state students for recruitment.
- Increasing Medicaid reimbursement rates for dental care services.

Data Source & Year(s): U.S. HHS, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, National Plan and Provider Enumeration System, September 2023

Suggested Citation: America's Health Rankings analysis of U.S. HHS, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, National Plan and Provider Enumeration System, September 2023, United Health Foundation, AmericasHealthRankings.org, accessed 2024.

[Click here to see how your state ranks](#)

Quick Video Tips.

UHC Advocacy and Member Experience



Let's make healthier happen

A health plan that's easier to understand and simpler to use — that's what we're all about it. Get the scoop on your benefits and feel confident knowing what your plan has to offer.

[Watch: UHC Advocacy](#)



July is National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

It is a time to bring awareness to the unique challenges that racial and ethnic minorities in the United States face when it comes to mental illness. In 2020, fewer than one in every two African American adults got care for mental health. In 2018, Asian Americans were 60 percent less likely to receive mental health treatment than non-Hispanic Whites. Obstacles for many include a lack of health insurance, less access to treatment, and stigma.

Mental illness can affect individuals of all races and ethnicities. Show your support this month and beyond by learning more about mental health. You can also use and share these resources to help spread awareness about mental health in your communities and families.

What is Mental Health

Mental health includes emotional, mental, and social well-being. Mental health impacts how a person thinks and feels. It also affects how you act, manage stress, and make choices. When you take care of your mental health, you are better able to cope with stress or challenges.

Sometimes it can be hard to manage your mental health. If you have noticed a change in thoughts, behaviors, or moods that disrupts your life, talk to your health care provider. You can also contact a mental health specialist or a trusted loved one for help if you have noticed these changes in yourself or in a loved one.

What Causes Mental Illness?

There is no single cause for mental illness. Multiple mental illnesses can occur at the same time and at random. They can also last for a short or long period of time.

Your mental health can change at any point. Some risk factors that can play a role in developing mental illness include:

- Use of alcohol or drugs
- Feeling lonely or isolated
- Biological factors or chemical imbalances in the brain
- Adverse childhood experiences, like child abuse or sexual assault
- Experiences tied to ongoing medical conditions, like cancer or diabetes

Symptoms of a Mental Illness

Most of the same mental illness can develop in both men and women. However, women may have more distinct symptoms.

- Pulling away from people and usual activities
- Appetite or weight changes
- Ongoing sadness or feelings of hopelessness
- Intense changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Clear changes in mood, energy level, or appetite

Sources: [National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month | FDA](#)

[Click here to learn more](#)

Member Resources – UnitedHealthcare app for members

Use your mobile device to download the app

Scan the QR code now to get started. Only have access to a desktop or tablet device? [Register or sign in to your member account.](#)



Count on 24/7, always there access to your plan

Not all features are available for every plan. Some plans aren't currently supported by the app.



Find care and pricing

Search for network providers near you, see ratings and reviews, and estimate out-of-pocket costs for different types of visits.



Check your benefits and coverage

Find copay and coinsurance amounts, view plan spending and see how your plan covers different types of care and services.



Refill prescriptions

Conveniently request refills right from the app. You can also look up drug prices and search for pharmacies near you.



View your claims

Check the status of new and past claims. See the amount billed, what your plan paid and how much you owe.



Access your plan ID cards

Easily view and show your UCard or member ID cards when you need them. Add your health plan details to your Apple Wallet or Google Wallet too.



Get virtual care

If your plan includes this benefit, you may be able to schedule a virtual visit for urgent care, routine care and more.

**Get help using the
UnitedHealthcare app**

What's on the menu?



Red White and Blue Fruit Skewers with Cheesecake Yogurt Dip

Easy Red White and Blue Fruit Skewers with Cheesecake Yogurt Dip is the perfect no-bake dessert for the summer!

If you need a quick dessert that doesn't require much work, it doesn't get easier than this! These fresh strawberry, blueberry and angel food cake skewers are perfect for Memorial, Fourth of July, Labor Day or any summer party.

MAKE AHEAD

This will feed a large crowd, you can make the dip the night before, assemble it in the morning, and refrigerate until ready to eat.

VARIATIONS

- You can skip the skewers and just serve the fruit in a bowl with the dip.
- Use a pound cake or gluten-free cake instead

Ingredients

For the cheesecake dipping sauce:

- 4 oz 1/3 less fat cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup fat free Greek or plain yogurt
- 1 tsp vanilla
- ¼ cup raw sugar

For the skewers:

- 14 oz angel foods cake, cut into about 1-inch cubes
- 72-84 medium strawberries, about 3.5 lbs. stems removed
- 1 pint blueberries
- 24-48 skewers

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a medium bowl, combine the cream cheese with yogurt, vanilla and sugar. Mix well until sugar dissolves; set aside.
2. Thread 3 strawberries and 2 cubes of cake onto each skewer, alternating between strawberries and cake.
3. Finish each skewer with 3 blueberries.

Place finished skewers on a platter and refrigerate until ready to eat.

Nutrition Information:

Yield: 24 Serving Size: 1 skewer, 1 tbsp dip

Prep time: 20 mins, Cook time: 0 mins, Total time: 20 mins

Calories – 105
Carbohydrates – 18.5g
Protein – 3 g
Fat – 2.5 g
Saturated Fat – 0.5g
Sugars – 7 g
Fiber – 2 g
Sodium – 147.5mg
Cholesterol – 1.5 mg

[Click here for the recipe](#)

Source: <https://www.skinnytaste.com/red-white-and-blue-fruit-skewers-with/>

August Preview

- Health Observance: Sleep Awareness Month
- Health Tip Flier of the Month: Sleep for Health
- United at Work Presentation: Sleep for Health
- Video of the month: Cancer Educational Video: You're Not Alone

**United
Healthcare**

Insurance coverage provided by or through
UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company or its affiliates.
Administrative services provided by United
HealthCare Services, Inc. or their affiliates. Health
Plan coverage provided by or through
UnitedHealthcare of AZ/NM, Inc.