

# JELINEK JOURNAL

703-584-5996

www.NorthernVirginiaDental.com

## THE PURSUIT OF SMILES

### *What We've Learned About Dental Health Throughout the Pandemic*

This March marks one year since the COVID-19 pandemic prompted lockdowns across the U.S., and our houses became a strange combination of work, school, and leisure. Throughout this time, we learned a few things, and these lessons included so much more than how to bake sourdough bread or what shows were streaming on Netflix.

We often take our health for granted until threatened; I guess it's human nature. But to top that off, the pandemic has caused us to lose our mobility and impacted our routines — part of which is receiving routine dental care. Many dental professionals, including myself, found that this period of lapses in dental care provided key lessons for our patients.

These are my top four oral health lessons from the pandemic and this past year.

- **Lesson No. 1**

**Oral Health Matters:** I've preached this for decades, but the pandemic exemplified just how important our immune systems are and how much oral health impacts our ability to fight off viruses and other invaders. If you're unaware, numerous studies found that people with gum disease were more prone to COVID-19 and have had poor outcomes.

- **Lesson No. 2**

**Nasal Breathing Is Proper Breathing:** Even if you're a habitual nasal breather — which is a good thing — wearing a mask often encourages mouth breathing. This has several consequences.

- *Mask Mouth:* This occurs when sulfur-reducing bacteria accumulates on the tongue causing bad breath.
- *Dry Mouth:* This results from mouth breathing and contributes to bad breath. It can also lead to an increased risk of gum disease and cavities.

- **Lesson No. 3**

**Stress Promotes Teeth Grinding:** In New York City, there was a dramatic rise in broken teeth and TMJ problems after the 9/11

terrorist attacks. This pandemic has been 10 times worse. Dentists around the world have been inundated with people who have broken fillings, caps, and teeth. We have had a record number of calls from patients with jaw pain issues. With more stress and teeth grinding, that's bound to happen.

- **Lesson No. 4**

**Sleep Apnea Has Dental**

**Consequences:** Getting oxygen is the most important way to sustain life, so the brain will direct the body to do anything and everything to maximize oxygen intake. During apneic episodes (oxygen deprivation) that are common in those with obstructive sleep apnea, people tend to move their jaws in weird ways. This can result in cracked teeth, loosened teeth, and even TMJ problems.

In summation, what I've learned as a result of this pandemic is that oral health, fostered by the kind of routine care performed by our practice is not just an important component of overall health and wellness; it's part of a strategy to prevent so many debilitating problems. Our preventive approach is what is needed in an environment when so many other things are not in our control.

Please don't neglect your oral health. It's a matter of Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Smiles.

To everyone's excellent health and wellness,

— Chuck



# IMPROVE YOUR ATTENTION SPAN And Transform Your Life!

Since the COVID-19 pandemic swept across the world last year, many things have gotten shorter, like school days and our patience. But perhaps the main thing that's grown shorter for all of us is our attention spans.

In 2019, researchers from the Technical University of Denmark reported that our collective attention span is indeed narrowing — and it may be because we're bombarded with tons of information that we don't want to "miss out" on, whether we're scrolling through Facebook or finding new videos on YouTube.

Unfortunately, a poor attention span can affect us in many ways. It may impact our performance at school or work or cause communication difficulties in relationships. It may even result in poor health related to self-neglect and an inability to practice healthy habits.

How do you fix it? Is it even possible to improve your attention span? Yes, you can! But it will take time. Here are a few ways you can get started.

**First, accept that you may make yourself a little mentally uncomfortable while expanding your attention span.** It simply won't feel natural to focus on a single task for a longer period of time than normal, but, with a routine, it'll get more comfortable as time goes on.

**Second, give the Pomodoro method a try.** Named after a tomato-shaped timer that its creator used, the Pomodoro method has gained a lot of attention over the years as a brain workout, and it's a great way to slowly expand your attention span while accomplishing tasks.

To get started, think of a small task. Then, set a timer to 25 minutes (or longer, if your attention span will allow). Work on your task for 25 minutes straight. Then, take a five-minute break. After the break, repeat the process. After four rounds, take a break of 15–20 minutes.

Congratulations, you've used the Pomodoro method, which you can repeat as many times as you want. It's very handy for getting your tasks finished in a flash, despite any attention span issues!

**Third, meditate, work out, or adopt new educational interests.** Anything that keeps your brain, body, and spirit engaged can help you learn how to focus better. There's plenty of research that shows the benefits of meditation and exercise to your focus — the trick is exploration. Not every form of meditation, exercise routine, or hobby will work for you, so don't give up right away! Stay curious and keep exploring.

We're living in a technological age where we can learn almost anything and reach almost anyone at the tap of a button, so we have to learn how to create opportunities for ourselves. We hope these tips help you get started!

## You're Never Too Old to Have the Smile of Your Dreams!

### *2 Cosmetic Options for Adults*

A person's smile is often the first thing others notice about them. However, if your oral health has always caused you to hide behind your hand or flash a strained smile, you may think it's too late to fix your crooked, misaligned, broken, or discolored teeth.

That couldn't be further from the truth!

Dental technologies have made it easier than ever for patients of all ages to fix their crooked or broken teeth with simple, effective, and minimally invasive treatment options, such as these two choices.

#### **Invisalign**

You've likely heard of this treatment alternative to braces, but did you know that Invisalign can be one of the easiest options for straightening your teeth? Invisalign treatments involve a series of clear plastic aligners that nudge your teeth into the ideal position — both for aesthetics and proper function. The process begins with X-rays, impressions, and photographs taken by Dr. Jelinek. These are used to determine the number of aligners you will need and how long the treatment process will take, ensuring it's fully customized for your needs.

The biggest benefit of Invisalign is that the aligners are clear and — as the name suggests — nearly invisible. Each one is easily removed for eating and drinking, which means you don't have to give up popcorn or caramel! Best of all, you won't have to contend with bulky metal braces each time you eat or interact with others.

#### **Dental Bonding**

Another option for repairing smiles involves a little magic known as dental bonding. Dr. Jelinek uses a white filling that matches the existing or ideal color of your teeth to create an illusion of straight and perfectly colored or shaped teeth. Dental bonding is perfect for those with tooth gaps, chips or broken teeth, discoloration, and misshapen teeth. The material is designed to function and look like real teeth, so after the treatment, no one will suspect your teeth are anything but real.

These treatments are designed to fit into your lifestyle, so what are you waiting for? **Schedule a consultation by calling 703-584-5996 or visiting [NorthernVirginiaDental.com](http://NorthernVirginiaDental.com).**



# Schedule Your Next Cleaning

## Why Regular Checkups Are Important for Your Health



In this month's cover article, Dr. Jelinek highlighted how proper dental care and hygiene have not been a priority for many patients during this pandemic. It's understandable that we would forget common routines during times of high stress, but consistent and healthy dental hygiene are critical to oral and overall health. Part of that hygiene routine includes regular cleanings.

Think of regular dental cleanings like any other maintenance check. You wouldn't let your vehicle run low on oil, waiting for something to break *before* taking it to a mechanic. Instead, you regularly change the oil, get it washed, and listen for noises or signs of wear. While dental professionals can repair damaged or broken teeth, regular dental cleanings also prevent these costly damages from happening in the first place.

When Dr. Jelinek is examining a patient's mouth, he often uses necessary X-rays and other diagnostic tests and tools to find budding cavities, signs of decay, or other dental problems not readily noticeable on the surface of

the tooth. Most cavities that are diagnosed can not be seen by the naked eye and are detectable only by X-rays, and that is why necessary X-rays are so important.

At a regular cleaning, your dentist will clear away plaque buildup (that naturally sticks to your teeth) and look for common signs of oral health conditions, like gum disease. Routine checks for oral cancers or other chronic ailments that can manifest symptoms in the mouth are also part of the regular cleaning process.

This can be critical to your well-being. The American Dental Hygienists Association has published multiple studies that have found links between the mouth and overall wellness. Regular dental maintenance and screenings could prevent or lessen the severity of these conditions.

Unless explicitly told otherwise by your dentist, you should have a regular cleaning every six months. These appointments might only take 60 minutes of your day, but they could mean the difference between having painful, damaged teeth or having a healthy smile. **Schedule your next cleaning today by visiting [NorthernVirginiaDental.com](http://NorthernVirginiaDental.com) or by calling 703-584-5996.**



## Sudoku

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   | 1 |   |   |   |   | 3 | 6 | 5 |
|   |   | 5 |   | 9 | 6 |   |   |   |
|   |   |   | 2 |   |   |   | 8 | 1 |
| 7 | 5 |   | 9 | 4 |   |   |   |   |
|   | 6 | 2 |   |   | 3 |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | 4 |   | 2 |
|   | 8 |   |   |   |   |   |   | 3 |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | 1 | 4 |   |
|   |   |   | 5 | 8 |   | 2 |   | 7 |

*Solution on Pg. 4*

## Tasty Thai Fried Rice

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 8 oz baby bella mushrooms, sliced
- 4 cups broccoli, chopped to bite-size pieces
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 5 cups jasmine rice, cooked and cooled
- 1/2 cup peanuts, chopped
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- Toppings of choice for serving (sliced green onions, sliced cucumber, chopped peanuts, lime wedges, Sriracha, etc.)

### DIRECTIONS

1. In a large nonstick skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion and cook for 2–3 minutes, until softened.
2. Add the mushrooms and broccoli. Cook for 5–7 minutes, until the broccoli is tender.
3. Add the garlic and cook for 30 seconds, until fragrant.
4. Finally, add the rice and cook, stirring constantly, for 3–4 minutes.
5. Remove skillet from the heat and stir in the peanuts and soy sauce.
6. Serve garnished with your toppings.

*Inspired by OhMyVeggies.com.*

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 1 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 8 | 3 | 6 | 5 |
| 8 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 4 |
| 6 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 1 |
| 7 | 5 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 6 |
| 4 | 6 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 9 |
| 1 | 9 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| 9 | 8 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 3 |
| 5 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 1 | 4 | 8 |
| 3 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 7 |

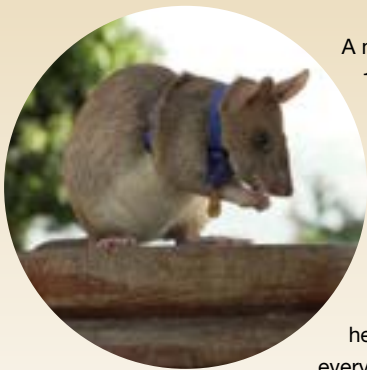
Solution from Pg. 3

PRST STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
BOISE, ID  
PERMIT 411

# INSIDE

- 1 *Oral Health Lessons Courtesy of the Pandemic*
- 2 *How to Improve Your Attention Span! You're Never too Old for a New Smile!*
- 3 *Your Dental Checkup is Vital to Your Dental Health*  
*Tasty Thai Fried Rice*
- 4 *Meet This Life-Saving Rat From Cambodia*

## An African Rat Receives Prestigious Gold Medal for Saving Lives



A metal detector can take anywhere from 1–4 days to detect land mines in the war-torn landscapes of Cambodia. However, a Gambian pouched rat named Magawa can detect them in 20 minutes.

Magawa's ability to sniff land mines has been lauded as "truly unique," as he potentially saves hundreds of lives every day even at his mere weight of 2.75 pounds and small size of only 28 inches long.

While that's larger than your average rodent, Magawa is still light enough to safely step over land mines without setting them off.

That's been amazing news for Cambodians. The land mine problem began during the civil wars of the '70s and '80s, causing over 64,000 casualties and creating 25,000 amputees since 1979.

But where did Magawa come from? A Belgium-registered charity named Apopo trained Magawa in Tanzania as part of the program HeroRATs where

after a year of training, the animals become certified. This program has been around since the 1990s, teaching animals how to detect land mines and tuberculosis.

Magawa only works for a half-hour during the day, but as he nears retirement age at 7 years old, Magawa has sniffed out 39 land mines and 28 unexploded munitions in his career. His tremendous work has now been recognized worldwide.

In 2020, the U.K. veterinary charity PDSA gave Magawa its gold medal for "life-saving devotion to duty, in the location and clearance of deadly land mines in Cambodia." Over 30 animals have received this award so far, but Magawa is the first rat.

"To receive this medal is really an honour for us," Apopo's chief executive, Christophe Cox, told the Press Association news agency. "But also, it is big for the people in Cambodia, and all the people around the world who are suffering from land mines."

Now that's a real hero if we've ever seen one. Thank you, Magawa, for all your hard work, and we hope you have a long and happy retirement ahead of you!