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Easy ways to keep your immune system strong

The immune system is a powerful component of the human body. The immune system recognizes when viruses, bacteria and other foreign invaders enter or compromise the body, and then takes action to prevent illnesses from taking over. The average person can help his or her immune system do its job more effectively by making the immune system as strong as it can be.

Harvard Medical School says that diet, exercise, age, and psychological stress may affect immune system response. Certain lifestyle choices can promote a strong immune system.

- **Get adequate sleep.** Doctors believe sleep and immunity are closely tied. A study of 164 healthy adults published by the National Institutes of Health found those who slept fewer than six hours each night were more likely to catch a cold than people who slept for more than six hours. Aim for adequate rest each night to keep your body in top form.

- **Increase your intake of fruits and vegetables.** Fruits and vegetables supply the

powerhouse antioxidants that are essential for protecting a body against free radicals. Free radicals may play a role in heart disease, cancer and other diseases. Serve fruits and/or vegetables with every meal to ensure you're getting enough antioxidant-rich foods.

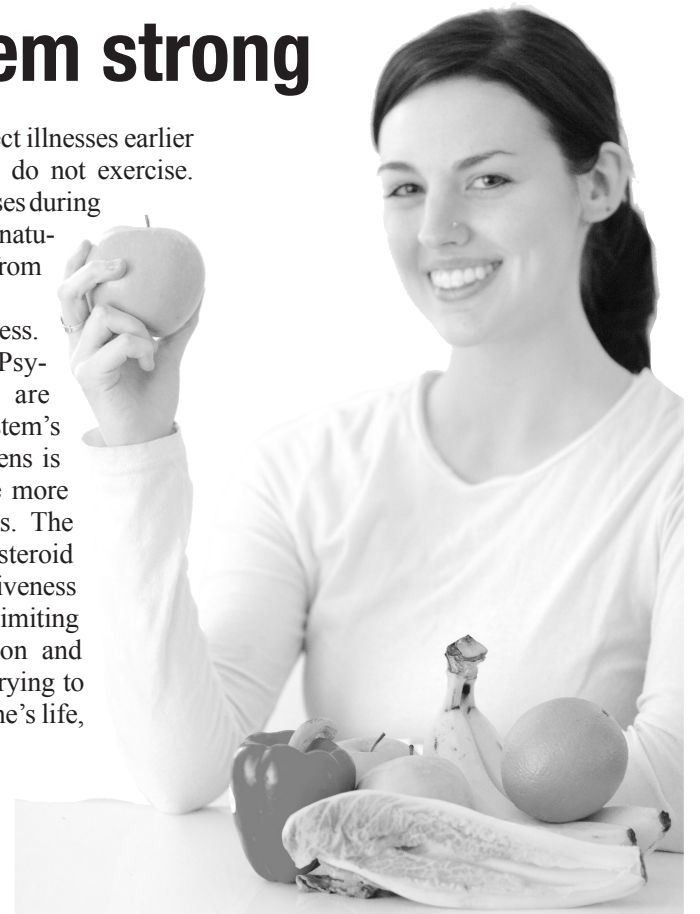
- **Consume fiber and fermented foods.** Fiber can help feed the gut microbiome, which is linked to a robust immune system. The microbiome also may prevent harmful pathogens from entering the body through the digestive tract. Data also suggests that eating more fermented foods can further strengthen and populate healthy bacteria in the gut.

- **Exercise regularly.** Aim for 30 minutes of moderate exercise per day, advises the American Heart Association. Thirty minutes of exercise each day can go a long way toward keeping the body healthy. The U.S. National Library of Medicine says physical activity may help flush bacteria out of the lungs and airways. Exercise causes changes in antibodies and white blood cells. These antibodies and white blood cells circulate

rapidly, so they may detect illnesses earlier than they would if you do not exercise. Body temperature also rises during exercise, which could naturally prevent bacteria from growing.

- **Try to minimize stress.** According to Simply Psychology, when people are stressed, the immune system's ability to fight off antigens is reduced, making people more susceptible to infections. The stress hormone corticosteroid can suppress the effectiveness of the immune system. Limiting stress through meditation and breathing exercises, or trying to remove stressors from one's life, may help.

A healthy immune system is vital to fending off or recovering from illness.



Simple ways to avoid the 'quarantine 15'

Social distancing has led to some surprising and some not so surprising side effects. Many business owners have been pleasantly surprised to learn how smoothly their employees have transitioned to working remotely. On the opposite end of the spectrum, the effects of stay-at-home orders have led to some predictable feelings of restlessness and cabin fever.

One unforeseen consequence of social distancing noted by many people is the "quarantine 15," a term used to refer to weight gained while under stay-at-home orders. An inability to get out and about coupled with the proximity of kitchen can make it easy for people to gain weight as they observe stay-at-home orders. However, there are various ways people can avoid gaining weight while social distancing.

- **Adhere to a routine.** The wellness resource UCI Health notes that lack of structure has been a common side effect of social distancing. But people should adhere to a routine even if they're working from home or have been laid off or furloughed. A routine with established mealtimes can help people avoid random snacking that can contribute to weight gain.



DAILY EXERCISE can help people avoid quarantine-related weight gain.

- **Drink more water.** The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics notes that mild dehydration can

be mistaken for feelings of hunger. Keep track of how much water you're drinking each day, resolving

to drink more if you're not consuming enough. If you're not having any water after your morning cup

of coffee, the mid-afternoon urges to eat may be signs of mild dehydration and not hunger.

- **Make time for exercise.** Exercise is essential to maintaining a healthy weight. Social distancing has given many people more free time than they know what to do with. Fill the boredom with exercise, utilizing online tutorials to engage in weight-free exercises if necessary. Go for daily strolls around the neighborhood or, if possible, purchase some home gym equipment.

- **Set goals.** One of the ways to stay the course when beginning a fitness regimen is to set goals. Whether you're exercising for the first time in years or replacing regular workouts at a fitness center with exercising at home, set reasonable goals, including how many days a week you hope to exercise and how many pounds, if any, you hope to lose each week.

The quarantine 15 has been an unforeseen consequence of social distancing. Avoiding such weight gain while adhering to social distancing guidelines can be easier than people may think.

Medley Pharmacy introduces new prescription medication disposal method

Medley Pharmacy is partnering with Sharps Compliance, Inc. to combat the growing epidemic of prescription drug abuse by providing solutions to safely dispose of opioid painkillers and other unused medications. MedSafe® drug collection and disposal receptacle is now located in the pharmacy for the safe and anonymous disposal of unused or expired medicines and controlled substances.

Most Americans recognize that prescription drug abuse is a growing problem and one that flourishes in all communities. “We often receive questions from our customers asking how they can safely get rid of their unused medications,” said Todd Kurzenberger, Sales and Marketing Manager for Medley Pharmacy. “We’re happy to be able to give back to our community and customers by providing a safe solution to getting unused medications out of their homes and harm’s way.

Customers can simply bring in their unused pills to our pharmacy and drop them into a Sharps Compliance MedSafe, which

is a specially designed receptacle for the safe, cost-effective, and convenient way to dispose of potentially dangerous drugs.

“Safe disposal of prescription medication is a vital strategy for preventing prescription drug abuse and keeping the water supply safe,” said David P. Tusa, president and chief executive officer Sharps Compliance, Inc. “We are thrilled to partner with pharmacies and healthcare organizations to provide a convenient method to dispose of unwanted medications.”

The MedSafe receptacles are securely installed and can only be accessed and emptied by two pharmacy employees as required by the DEA guidelines. MedSafe receptacles are located in retail pharmacies, long-term care facilities, hospitals and clinics with onsite pharmacies, law enforcement, government agencies and narcotic treatment facilities.

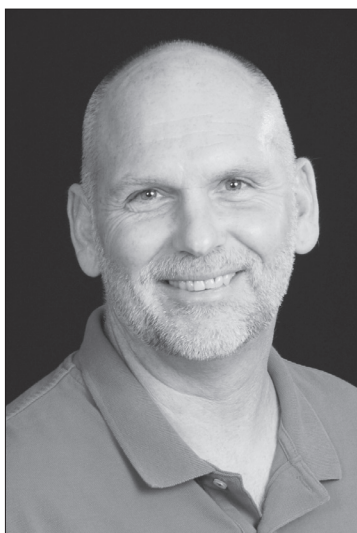
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How the foods you eat might help you fight cancer

Many people are familiar with certain ways to reduce their risk for cancer. Avoiding tobacco, which the National Cancer Institute notes is a leading cause of cancer and death from cancer, and protecting oneself from the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays by applying sunscreen are two of the most widely known ways to reduce cancer risk. But fewer people may recognize the important role diet can play in fighting cancer.



According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, a nutritious diet can reduce your cancer risk. That makes eating right one of the easiest, not to mention the most delicious, ways to reduce your risk for a disease that is often preventable. But how exactly does diet lower cancer risk?

Healthy diets and healthy weights

The American Cancer Society estimates that excess body weight is responsible for about 8 percent of all cancers and roughly 7 percent of all cancer deaths in the United States. A healthy diet full of fruits, vegetables and lean protein can help people lose weight and keep the weight off once it's gone, thereby reducing cancer risk.

Healthy diets and exercise

Unhealthy foods and oversized portions can contribute to feelings of fatigue. Such feelings can make it hard to get off the couch and exercise. While the ACS acknowledges

that more studies are necessary to determine the link between sedentary behavior and cancer risk, various studies have shown links between physical activity and reduced cancer risk. For example, a 2016 meta-analysis of 10 cohort studies published in the *Clinical Journal of Sports Medicine* found that individuals who were the most physically active had a 19 percent lower risk of stomach cancer than those who were least active. By eating healthier foods and controlling their portions, people may discover they have more energy to get up and exercise, reaping all the rewards that such activity has to offer, including a lower risk for cancer.

Healthy diets and strong immune systems

Another way certain foods can help you fight cancer is by bolstering your immune system, making it more capable of fighting disease. The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, a world renowned medical center devoted exclusively to cancer patient care, notes that the fiber, phytochemicals and antioxidants humans get from consuming plants bolster their immune systems. A strong immune system is a vital ally in the fight against cancer.

The old adage "You are what you eat" is rooted in truth. And people who eat healthy foods are more likely to be healthy as a result.

Local clinic here for community during COVID-19

Gasconade County has done well in containing the COVID-19 virus by following the stay at home measures and taking precautions when out in public. COVID-19 has affected all of us and we at the Medical Clinic of Owensville want to thank everyone for cooperating in following the new rules and guideline to prevent the spread of the virus. It is important for people to continue to look out for your health care and continue with your scheduled routine visits for Diabetes, Hypertension, and other Health Care issues. Dr Vicky Gulley and Nurse Practitioner Barbara ApplemanGraham continue to be available to meet your medical needs. Brandylyn Bristow, LCSW is available for a range of mental health services including anxiety, stress, depression and coping skills.

The Medical Clinic of Owensville wants to reassure everyone the clinic is open and able to see you in person or if you prefer we are happy to offer you a telehealth visit. These options are available for most visit types including sick, follow-up and mental health services for new and established patients. The clinic is taking safety precautions and infection control measures to protect you and the clinic staff to safely manage your care.

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How to clean cloth face masks

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has recommended that people wear cloth face coverings in public settings where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Even as the world begins to unpause, wearing masks seems likely to continue.

According to Penni Watts, Ph.D., RN, an assistant professor of nursing at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Nursing, masks are designed not to prevent the wearer from getting ill, but to protect other people from getting the virus. Masks protect others from your germs when you cough or sneeze. They're also an effective way to help people to avoid touching their faces.

Masks are exposed to the elements and germs each time they are worn, meaning they will require cleaning. Even though Harvard Health suggests COVID-19 may live more readily on hard surfaces than fabric, the CDC urges people to give cloth face masks the same level of care as regular laundry. Masks should be washed and dried often. The CDC offers these tips on how to clean most cloth and fabric masks.

- Fabric face masks should be washed depending on the frequency of use. More frequent use necessitates more frequent washing.
- A washing machine should be adequate for properly washing a face covering. Choose a warm setting for water temperature. Place masks in the dryer afterward.
- More delicate, hand-sewn masks may be washed by hand, suggests The Good Housekeeping Institute Cleaning Lab. Lather masks with soap and scrub them for at least 20 seconds with warm or hot water before placing in the dryer.
- For additional sanitation, iron masks on the cotton or linen setting for a few minutes to kill remaining germs.
- If masks are fortified with a filter, such as a coffee or HVAC filter, keep in mind that these filters are designed for single use. Paper filters should be replaced after each use. HVAC filters are washable, but manufacturers warn that their effectiveness decreases with each wash. Medium weight nonwoven interface used as filter material is typically washable.

Various health agencies do not condone using steam or microwaves to clean cloth face masks, as these sanitizing techniques are not as effective as regular laundering. Also, never microwave non-fabric dust or N95 respirator masks if you are using them. They can catch fire or be rendered useless.

Cloth face masks can help safeguard against germs like the novel coronavirus. However, they need to be cleaned regularly to remain sanitary.

“The hardest arithmetic to master is that which enables us to count our blessings.” — Eric Hoffer

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Allergies or COVID-19?

As winter gave way to spring, nature did not give any signs in relation to what the people of the world were going through. As trees and flowers bloomed just like they do every spring, the people accustomed to witnessing the awe-inspiring transformation on display each spring were experiencing a transformation of their own.

Social distancing measures enacted during the COVID-19 outbreak in late-winter 2020 forced many people to stay home, only venturing outside to run routine errands like buying groceries or filling prescriptions. People were urged to stay home to help prevent the COVID-19 virus from spreading, and those recommendations included people exhibiting mild symptoms of illness.

As spring hit its stride and pollen counts climbed, many people wondered if certain symptoms they were experiencing were byproducts of seasonal allergies or the COVID-19 virus. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention note that it's easy to mistake common allergy symptoms for COVID-19, and that's especially so given the level of concern many people

have about the novel coronavirus that has already claimed thousands of victims across the globe. But it's important that people recognize the symptoms of allergies and COVID-19 are different. The following are some symptoms of allergies and some of COVID-19, courtesy of the CDC and the Mayo Clinic.

Allergy symptoms

- Itchy eyes
- Stuffy nose
- Sneezing

Doctors advise people who are exhibiting potential allergy symptoms to pay attention to their body temperatures. People with allergies very rarely experience fever, so the absence of fever, even if other symptoms of allergies are present, might indicate that a person is suffering from allergies and not COVID-19. In addition, allergy symptoms tend to be mild and recur year after year around the same time, such as when plants bloom in spring and summer. So if symptoms that are currently present are the same ones a person confronts every year, then he or she is likely suffering from allergies and not COVID-19. People can err on the side

of caution by discussing their symptoms and history with their physicians.

Coronavirus symptoms

- Shortness of breath
- Fever
- Cough

Some asthma sufferers experience shortness of breath as a result of allergies, so people with asthma should consider that before assuming they have COVID-19. Discussing shortness of breath with a physician can help asthma sufferers gain more clarity on their condition.

While symptoms of allergies and COVID-19 are different, the CDC notes that people suffering from the flu may experience the same symptoms experienced by people with the coronavirus. Symptoms such as fever, fatigue, body aches, and cough can affect both flu and COVID-19 sufferers, so people experiencing these symptoms should contact their physicians.

It's easy to mistake common allergy symptoms as indicative of the presence of the COVID-19 virus. But the symptoms of each condition are quite different. Learn more at www.cdc.gov.



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Uncovering Alzheimer's disease

MU researchers examine impact of menopause on cognitive function

COLUMBIA — Characterized by a buildup of amyloid plaques in the brain, Alzheimer's is an irreversible disease that leads to memory loss and a decrease in cognitive function. More than 5 million Americans suffer with the brain condition, which is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States. While the causes of Alzheimer's are not fully understood, scientists believe genetic, lifestyle and environmental factors are involved in the disease's development.

Now, researchers at the University of Missouri have found that the decline of reproductive hormones due to ovary removal, which is a model of menopause, can reduce cognitive function and potentially play a role

in the development of Alzheimer's disease in women. The findings could help explain why women make up nearly two-thirds of people in the United States with Alzheimer's disease, although gender is just one of many contributing factors.

Yuksel and Cansu Agca, researchers at the MU College of Veterinary Medicine, Mutant Mouse Resource and Research Center and Comparative Medicine Program, used rats experiencing induced menopause to serve as Alzheimer's models at Discovery Ridge Research Park. After placing the rats in a special maze designed to test their behavior, they found that the rats with induced menopause displayed poor memory and learning,

indicating a decline in cognitive function.

"We wanted to see what impact various interventions, such as hormone depletion from menopause, had on the potential development of Alzheimer's," said Yuksel Agca, associate professor of veterinary pathology. "These animal models can be useful for future testing to examine the impact of a variety of other factors, such as alcohol, smoking, diet, exercise, hypertension or previous traumatic brain injuries."

Although there is no cure for Alzheimer's currently, studying how the age-related disease progresses over time in animals can help better inform the development of therapeutic drugs for humans, such as hormone replacement therapy. Lifestyle choices can also be made to decrease the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease.

"While some people are genetically predisposed, or more likely, to develop Alzheimer's, avoiding bad habits like an unhealthy diet or lack of exercise can help reduce the risks," lead author Cansu Agca said. "It's a complicated disease to understand

because we all have variations in our genes, and we each respond to lifestyle choices and environmental factors differently, but this research can help us learn which factors are potentially contributing to or increasing the risk of Alzheimer's."

The research is an example of translational medicine, a major component of the NextGen Precision Health Institute. By partnering with government and industry leaders, the institute will empower interdisciplinary collaborations and life-changing precision health advancements targeting individual genetic, environmental and lifestyle factors.

"Ovariectomy Influences Cognition and Markers of Alzheimer's Disease" was recently published in Journal of Alzheimer's Disease (DOI 10.3233/JAD-190935). The research was supported by a University of Missouri-Research Incentive Fund. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the funding agencies.

Cancer warning signs

No one is immune to cancer, which the World Health Organization notes is the second leading cause of death across the globe. Though cancer is responsible for more than nine million deaths per year, the WHO notes that many cases of cancer are preventable.

The WHO estimates that one-third of deaths from cancer are due to five behavioral and dietary risks: high body mass index, low fruit and vegetable intake, lack of physical activity, tobacco use, and alcohol consumption. People who smoke, drink to excess and/or eat unhealthy diets can greatly reduce their risk for cancer and the likelihood that they will join the millions of cancer patients who die from the disease each year.

Learning the warning signs for cancer is another way people can reduce the likelihood that they will die from cancer. Cancer Research UK notes that cancers diagnosed at early stages are more likely to be treated successfully than those that are in the later stages. Late-stage cancers have typically spread beyond their origination point, making treatment more difficult and survival less likely.

Early detection of cancer is vital to survival. For instance, Cancer Research UK notes that more than nine in 10 bowel



MAINTAINING AN ongoing dialogue with your physician is a great way to detect cancer in its earliest stages, which is when the disease is most treatable.

cancer patients will survive their disease for more than five years if diagnosed at the earliest stage. The five-year survival rates are similar for breast cancer and ovarian cancer patients whose diseases are diagnosed in their earliest stages.

By learning some of the common warning signs of cancer, people can increase the likelihood of early detection, greatly improving their chances of surviving this potentially deadly disease. Each type of cancer has its own unique symptoms, and people with family histories of cancer are urged to discuss those histories with their physicians so they can learn the warning signs of the specific cancers that may run in their families. In addition to such discussions, men and women can keep an eye out for these symptoms, which the Cleveland Clinic notes are some of the more general indicators of cancer.

- Change in bowel or bladder habits
- A sore that does not heal
- Unusual bleeding or discharge
- Thickening or lump in the breast or elsewhere
- Indigestion or difficulty swallowing
- Obvious change in a wart or mole
- Nagging cough or hoarseness

More information about cancer is available at www.who.int.

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Dr. William A. Lynch, Jr.

this test, we are able to identify those who have AMD at the earliest possible moment. Early intervention reduces the affects of AMD and preserves good vision.

Research has also shown that making certain changes to your nutritional and lifestyle habits, such as quitting smoking, eating 10 servings of fruits and vegetables, can reduce your risk of many eye diseases.

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This surprising discovery about shaking babies will save lives

BY MILAN TOMA

Babies are at far greater risk of brain damage than previously thought.

Even activities that seem innocent, like a run in a jogging stroller, can inflict abusive head trauma. And head injuries often go entirely undetected, so parents unwittingly repeat the same harmful behaviors.

These conclusions, which come from a new study I co-authored, must be used to better educate new parents and inform manufacturers as they design car seats, safety helmets, and the like.

Abusive head trauma, or AHT, is typically referred to as --"shaken baby syndrome" -- the consequence of awful, deliberate abuse. Every year, an estimated 1,300 infants suffer this brain trauma. Roughly one in four tragically dies. Of those who survive, about 80 percent develop lifelong disabilities.

Of course, the overwhelming majority of parents would never intentionally harm their children. But it's possible to inflict AHT without even knowing it.

There are several reasons why this unsettling truth is just now coming to light. It's difficult to diagnose AHT. Some cases result in noticeable injuries, including bone fractures. But others result in far milder symptoms. Many victims of AHT show no signs of trauma.

Plus, studying the biomechanics of AHT— what occurs inside a child's skull when his or her head moves back and forth rapidly — presents its own challenges. There's no ethical way to observe or replicate such injuries in a scientific setting.

Thankfully, there's another way to study the problem. My colleagues and I used computer models to simulate the biomechanics of AHT. Specifically, we looked at how

the cerebrospinal fluid cushions the brain when a child is shaken repeatedly.

What our models revealed is startling. Even at the lowest frequency we studied — two shakes per second — a single shake is dangerous. After that initial shake, the cerebrospinal fluid stops cushioning the brain altogether, causing the child's brain to collide with the skull wall.

In other words, it doesn't take a violent act of frustration to damage a baby's brain. Something as ordinary as playfully tossing a child in the air or jogging with a baby could inflict head trauma.

Our conclusions suggest several strategies for preventing head trauma in young children. The first is simple — parents must avoid any activity that shakes their infant's head even once, however harmless it might seem.

Designers should rely on biomechanical models when designing items like car seats, strollers, and other products. In 2018, U.S. emergency rooms treated children under five for 59,000 injuries related to nursery products. Strollers were involved in 8,200 of those injuries. Across all of these incidents, the child's head was the most commonly injured part of the body.

Better-constructed products based on the latest biomechanics research could go a long way toward reducing head injuries in children.

At the very least, researchers should use biomechanical simulations to evaluate the safety of existing baby products. Newer products are not necessarily safer than older ones. In February, biomechanics researchers found that World War I-era combat helmets provided better protection from certain kinds of explosions than current military helmets.

The latest biomechanics research reveals that babies are more vulnerable to head trauma than previously thought. It's time to minimize this trauma — or eliminate it — by



using these findings to educate new parents and design safer baby products.

Milan Toma, Ph.D. is an assistant professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering at New York Institute of Technology College of Engineering and Computing Sciences. This piece originally ran in the International Business Times.

How COVID-19 may change a trip to the dentist's office

KYLE D. BOGAN, DDS

As the coronavirus pandemic swept the U.S., state governments mandated that dental offices open only for emergency procedures. But in the coming weeks, some dental practices may resume regular appointments in individual states where businesses considered "essential" are allowed to re-open.

When dentists do re-open for full business, the patient experience may seem the same in some ways, but in other ways the offices will reflect a "new normal," says Dr. Kyle Bogan (www.drkylebogan.com), a general dentist and speaker on workplace culture.

"Dentists are accustomed to following stringent infection control precautions under normal circumstances to lower the risk of transmission of infectious diseases," Bogan says. "These precautions help keep both patients and dentists safe because it assumes all patients may have an infection, despite the reality that most won't.

"But now I expect patients will be given temperature checks before an appointment

and be asked to fill out a questionnaire regarding coronavirus symptoms. All hygiene and safety standards will be enhanced, and the look of a typical dental office will be different."

Bogan says those aren't the only ways a dental visit may be different as a result of COVID-19. Others include:

More safeguards against blood and saliva. When dentists work on your teeth, they can produce aerosols — droplets or sprays of saliva or blood — in the air. This happens routinely when the dentist uses a drill or when the teeth are scaled or polished. With the coronavirus pandemic, there is an increased risk that the blood or saliva may carry the virus and either directly infect the dental staff, or land on surfaces that the staff or the next patient can touch, Bogan says. "Equipment that reduces patient spray will come into play for patient and employee safety," he says. "You'll see preprocedural rinses with a hydrogen peroxide solution, which is effective at killing the virus and reducing viral load in the mouth. There will be more use of rubber dams, a shield that fits

over top of the tooth and minimizes aerosols in the area. The high-volume suction used to suction up spray will be used at a higher level. And some dentists may be wearing face shields."

An empty "waiting" room. Seeing several people in the waiting room reading magazines may be a thing of the past. "You shouldn't go into an office until it's your time to go in," Bogan says. "There will be limited, if any, occupancy in waiting rooms. Offices will schedule more time between appointments, both to maintain safe space between patients and to have sufficient time to clean up between patients. Parents or other people accompanying patients likely will have to wait outside the office.

Alternating office hours. "Offices may reduce schedules so fewer patients are there at once, reducing the chance for contact," Bogan says. "Another option is longer hours on certain nights, in part to accommodate patients who couldn't be seen during the shutdown — those who had to postpone non-essential appointments such as checkups, cleanings, and orthodontic adjustments."

"Along with having trust in your dentist's ability to care for your needs, more than ever a patient has to trust in the cleanliness and safety of the dental environment," Bogan says. "That's what will help set an office apart, and anything less will result in a patient migration."

Dr. Kyle Bogan (www.drkylebogan.com) is a general dentist and a speaker/consultant on workplace culture. He is the owner of North Orange Family Dentistry. Bogan earned a Fellowship in the Academy of General Dentistry and a Fellowship in the International College of Dentists. He is a member of the American Dental Association, the Ohio Dental Association, the International Dental Implant Association and the American Academy of General Dentistry. Bogan earned his Doctor of Dental Surgery degree from The Ohio State University, graduating Magna Cum Laude, and played sousaphone in the marching band.

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