

# Benefits Spotlight

NEWS FOR *You*. NEWS TO *Share*.

## Why Should You Consider Sunglasses?

We all feel a little more stylish in a nice pair of shades. But sunglasses can do a lot more than enhance your image. They can also protect your vision and your overall health.

Just like sunscreen protects your skin from the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays, sunglasses protect your eyes. Also like sunscreen, the kind you use matters.

### Know your rays

There are three kinds of UV rays. UVA and UVB rays can cause eye and skin damage. UVC rays are blocked by the ozone layer, so they don't reach the earth.

The more exposure your eyes have to UVA and UVB rays, the greater your risk of cataracts or macular degeneration (which leads to blindness) later in life. No one knows how much exposure is "safe." So it's important to protect your eyes whenever you're outdoors.<sup>1</sup>

### Get the right kind of sunglasses

Before you buy your next pair of sunglasses, make sure they meet medical standards for sun protection. According to the American Optometric Association, sunglasses should:

- Block 99 - 100 percent of both UV-A and UV-B rays
- Screen out 75 to 90 percent of visible light
- Have lenses that are perfectly matched in color and free of distortion and imperfection
- Have lenses that are gray for proper color recognition

Do you spend a lot of time outside — for work and/or for play? If so, think about getting wraparound frames to block even more radiation.

Children and teens can use sunglasses, too (especially since they generally spend more time outside than adults). Check with your pediatrician or family physician for recommendations on sunglasses for younger kids.

### Get regular eye exams

Another way to protect your eyes is through regular eye exams. These annual exams do a lot more than check your eyesight. They can also catch vision and other health problems early.

If it's been more than a year since your last eye exam, contact your eye care professional to schedule an appointment. Many vision plans — including DeltaVision — cover annual eye

exams. (If you're not sure if you have Delta Vision, or what is covered, ask your human resources representative.)

---

<sup>1</sup>Protecting Your Eyes from Solar Radiation, American Optometric Association, <http://www.aoa.org/patients-and-public/caring-for-your-vision/uv-protection?sso=y>

## Toothsome Travel Tips

Whether you're catching some rays at the beach or enjoying a book by the pool, summer is the perfect time to shirk your responsibilities and engage in a little R&R. But no matter how relaxed you get, you should never slack off on your oral health routine. To help keep your smile sparkling, we assembled a few tips on caring for your teeth while you travel!

1. Hitting the open road this summer? Keep floss, a toothbrush and a tube of toothpaste in the glove compartment. They'll be easily accessible when you want to clean your teeth at a rest stop after snacking. Road trip or not, it's not a bad idea to have these in your car for emergency touch-ups, just in case.
2. Travel cases for toothbrushes are great – they help prevent the bristles from touching surfaces that could transfer bacteria. But try to air-dry your toothbrush before storing it in the case. If drying time is not possible, before stowing your brush, give the bristles a pat with a dry paper towel or washcloth, or a quick blast from a hair dryer. A moist environment can lead to bacterial growth.
3. If you hop on an airplane, don't forget that toothpaste and mouthwash are considered liquids or gels, so the amount you carry on the plane is limited. This means they need to be in containers that are 3.4 ounces or less. Otherwise, you'll have to throw them away when going through security. Of course, you can also pack them in your checked luggage. Either way, consider safely storing them in sealable plastic bags so they don't leak on clothes or electronics.
4. While flying, you may experience a toothache that wasn't there just minutes before. If your getaway includes scuba diving, you could also experience this condition during your dive. The air pressure in the plane or while you're diving – the same reason your ears sometimes hurt – can make teeth with defective fillings, tooth decay or other problems ache a little, or even make your sinuses throb a bit. That ache is known as barodontalgia, more commonly called "flyer's toothache." There's not much you can do to alleviate this condition. Although the ache will likely go away on your trip, you should schedule a checkup with your dentist when you return.

Don't stray from your oral health routine. Vacation isn't an excuse to take a break from your oral health routine. Periodontal disease and bacteria sure don't take time off! Stick to brushing twice and flossing once daily to keep your smile picture perfect.

Most important: Know your benefits before you go! If you have questions about your coverage, contact Delta Dental before you travel.