

Insurance for Your Teeth in Tough Times

For the past several years, the news reports have all been the same: real estate sales are down, home foreclosure rates are up, the unemployment rate continues to rise, and the cost of everything from milk to clothes to toothpaste is on the increase. So, in the face of all of this depressing news about the difficult economy, what can you do to turn your frown upside down? The Massachusetts Dental Society (MDS) believes that it's more important than ever to have a positive and proactive approach in taking care of your teeth, which will help you keep some extra money in your pocket.

In addition to regular checkups, practicing dental hygiene at home is equally essential. Brushing and flossing will help keep your teeth in good shape and remove plaque, the sticky film that can build up on tooth surfaces. And if the bottom line is dictating what you buy these days, the MDS recommends taking the time to find out what brands of toothpaste and floss that carry the American Dental Association seal of approval are on sale at your local retail store, supermarket, or pharmacy.

Keep in mind, though, that when it comes to your oral health, prevention is key in any economy. Dental disease, by and large, is preventable. Good home care—brushing and flossing—is important every day. Neglect can cost a lot of money in the long run.

Money can also be saved by avoiding costly sweets and drinks. In times of stress, we often turn to comfort foods, such as candy, starchy

At times of economic downturn, it's vital that you don't skimp on taking care of your health. It's especially important to continue regular dental visits, which are "insurance for your teeth" and could actually save you money in the long run. Your dentist will be able to catch any potential problems early when they can be more easily treated. This can save you money by preventing more costly dental treatment and procedures later on. You can also save money by having your dental treatment completed in phases or working with your dentist's office to create a payment schedule. Some dental offices can help you with payment plans, so it is a good idea to ask what payment options they offer.

baked goods, soda, and sugary coffee drinks to soothe our nerves. Limiting your intake of these foods and beverages can help both your oral health and your wallet. Drinking tap water, especially if it's fluoridated, is a great alternative to pricey bottled water and soda. And healthy snack choices mean healthier teeth.

In addition to saving money by maintaining your oral health, you may find that a healthy smile can help you in your professional life and can go a long way toward improving your self-esteem. A positive outlook on your appearance and a healthy smile can also be invaluable during a job interview, as well as helping to boost your spirits. And who couldn't use a little of that these days?

