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LAUGH IT OFF!

The best medicine

AN O.C. INVENTOR HELPS SPREAD CHEER

Many people fear dentists – or things much scarier, such as a hospital stay.

Orange County paramedic and inventor Steve Islava is familiar with children

and adults facing trauma. Knowing that laughter does have many physiological and emotional benefits – such as releasing endorphins, promoting oxygen flow and benefiting the cardiovascular system – Islava created a device that can stimulate laughter. He calls it Laffy Laffalot.

Laffy is a bright orange toy that comes in a hard plastic, so it can be cleaned easily for use in hospitals. Laffy has 20 laugh tracks and four buttons for parents and others to create special messages to keep a child's spirit's up.

You can also record your own laughter and play it back, helping you to laugh away your fears. laffylaffalot.com



Sugar-proof your smile

5 tips for healthy holidays

October is Orthodontic Health Month, and with the holidays just around the corner, it's an important time to properly care for your teeth and braces. In honor of Orthodontic Health Month, check out the following tips for a healthy Halloween and holiday season:

1. Beggars really can be choosers

Select Halloween treats that are soft, including chocolate, peanut butter cups, or thinly sliced apples dipped in yogurt or chocolate sauce. It is wise to avoid any sticky, chewy, hard or crunchy foods that can damage braces, wires or even teeth. And, most importantly, always brush and floss your teeth after eating sweets.

2. Mix in 'smile-friendly' foods

Just as there are certain foods that aid in healthy hair and skin, there are foods that will help give you a beautiful, healthy smile. Items that are rich in fiber, such as apples and broccoli, help stimulate saliva production, which is effective in killing mouth

bacteria. Raw celery, carrots and nuts can clean teeth as you chew them, so they make good desserts or snacks.

Also, probiotics, which are beneficial bacteria found in certain yogurts, kefir and tempeh, can reduce acidity and bad bacteria in your mouth.

Make sure you're getting plenty of calcium, vitamin D, phosphorus and magnesium to help your teeth resist decay and stains, and strengthen the bone that holds them.

For gums, be sure you are incorporating foods or supplements with vitamin C and omega-3 fatty acids for healing and anti-inflammatory effects.

3. Watch out for staining agents

Certain foods and drinks – including beets, red wine, cola, coffee and most forms of tea (even many herbals) – can cause tooth discoloration.

The key to preventing this is to keep your mouth super clean and avoid the buildup of plaque, which attracts stains. If possible, brush right after eating or drinking these culprit

items to minimize the chance of stains setting on your teeth and to help your saliva naturally wash the stain away.

4. Sharing is caring

Give the gift of a smile. Smiling itself has many health benefits: It positively changes your mood and relieves stress; it boosts your immune system and lowers your blood pressure; it makes you feel more attractive; and it helps you look younger. Smiling is a great way to make yourself stand out while helping your body to function better. Smile to improve your health, your stress level and your attractiveness.

5. More than a beautiful smile

Though orthodontic treatment is often viewed as an aesthetic procedure, in reality straight teeth have various health benefits that go far beyond a beautiful smile. Properly aligned teeth leads to better oral health because they're easier to keep clean and bear a reduced risk for plaque buildup, tooth decay and periodontal disease. [OCF badiorthodontics.com](http://ocf.badiorthodontics.com)