**DENTAL SURVIVAL GUIDE:**

Some practical tips and advice for these challenging times!

1. Avoid **popcorn**:  notorious for causing gum infections if it gets stuck in gums. Biting on a solid kernel not so good either, see #2
2. Avoid chewing on very **hard** substances (i.e. ice):  can crack teeth/chip fillings
3. Avoid chewing really **sticky**, **chewy** foods, can get stuck between teeth/lodged in gums, potentially dislodge fillings, cause issues with braces, retainers
4. If you have a **filling on a front tooth**, be especially mindful/careful with it during this time. They tend to be more fragile than other types of fillings.
5. Please pay special attention to maintain **proper oral hygiene and good diet** at this time to avoid gingivitis/progression of any existing cavities, and be especially mindful if:  you are more cavity prone, you were informed of **existing cavities**, and/or have **SDF** placed on specific teeth (which is often visible).
6. Having **newly erupting** permanent molars can sometimes cause discomfort. Please keep them clean.

Timeline: 1st molars usually erupt around 6 year of age, 2nd molars usually erupt around age 12, wisdom teeth typically erupt between ages 17 and 25, although there is more variation. Keeping area clean is very important and warm salt water rinses may help too!

1. Please do your best to **avoid tooth injuries**:

If playing sports indoors or outdoors, be mindful of **protective** **equipment** recommended (i.e. mouthguard, helmets with facemasks, etc.)

Please be sure your **bike**, **scooter**, and **skateboard** riders are extra mindful during this time, these activities are more common causes of dental injuries.

For those **newer walkers** and **runners** still unsure on their feet, please be mindful of coffee tables and other furniture with corners, and running with socks on solid floors possibly leading to slipping.

1. If you are **currently in orthodontic treatment**, please pay special attention to items #1-3, 5 and follow any additional recommendations from the orthodontist. Orthodontic offices are likely closed at this time so best to avoid loose brackets, food caught in braces, broken retainers, etc.
2. As likely recommended by your orthodontist, **orthodontic wax** can be used to help protect irritated gums and cheeks from appliances. This can be purchased online or at pharmacies.
3. Now is the time to strictly **follow recommendations** provided by your dental team.

i.e. helping with brushing and flossing, good diet, brushing frequency (2 times per day) special cleaning techniques, using special toothpastes, cleaning instruments, rinses, etc.

We thank you in advance for all your efforts to maintain optimal dental health. I know we’re all trying to do our best to maintain our smiles during such times! Hope this helps!