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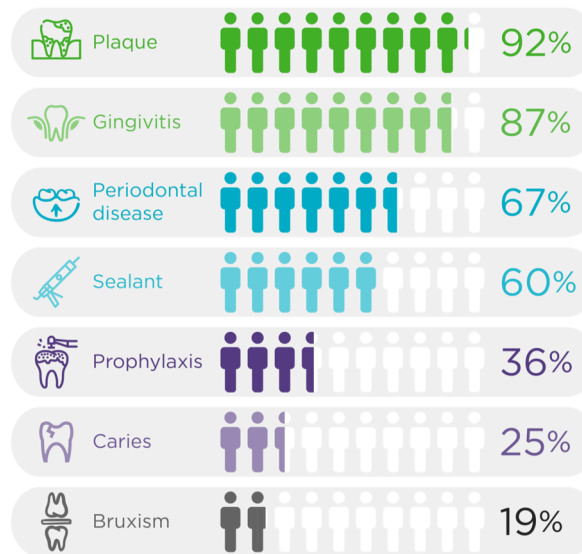
## Adults could brush up on dental terminology reveals Delta Dental survey

*Gap exists in Americans' knowledge of certain basic dental terms*

**OAK BROOK, Ill. — May 15, 2019** — Consider checking your dental IQ before your next visit to the dentist. A new Adult's Oral Health & Well-Being Survey indicates that a significant portion of the American population is not familiar with certain key dental terms. This unfamiliarity may lead to unease in the dental chair during discussions with your oral health care professional. The Delta Dental national survey finds that the majority of adults are not versed in bruxism (81%), caries (75%) and prophylaxis (64%).

### Is your dental IQ above average?

See American adults' self-gauged familiarity with certain dental terms.



Adult's Oral Health & Well-Being Survey from Delta Dental

Nearly all survey respondents (92%) say they are familiar with plaque. This sticky film of bacteria and other substances can lead to periodontal (gum) disease, if not removed every day. Most Americans seem versed in gingivitis. Only 13% of adults are not sure about this term, which is an early form of gum disease. Signs of gingivitis include gums that are inflamed, red and swollen and bleed easily.

#### National knowledge levels show opportunity for growth

While most adults score an A+ on familiarity with frequently used terms, such as plaque and gingivitis, there appears to be room for improvement in basic knowledge of other dental terms. One-third of Americans are not familiar with periodontal disease — one area they could brush up on. This very common condition, also known as gum disease, is typically preventable with proper oral care.

According to the national survey, 2 in 5 adults (40%) are not sure what the term sealant means. This common dental treatment helps to protect teeth from cavities, also known as caries, by keeping food and bacteria out.

“Sealants are simple, painless protection against cavities. Consider sealants as soon as your child’s permanent molar teeth come in,” said Dr. Joe Dill, DDS, MBA, Delta Dental Plans Association’s vice president of dental science and network strategy. “Although dental sealants tend to last for years, they should be regularly checked by your dentist for wear.”

Helping to prevent oral health problems, before they occur, is at the heart of many of Delta Dental’s community benefits efforts. In 2017, more than 4.2 million individuals were served by the Delta Dental companies’ dental prevention initiatives, including community water fluoridation, school sealant programs, and screenings.

#### **Dental distress preventing proper oral care**

About 70 million Americans, or nearly one-third of adults (31%) surveyed, admit to postponing a trip to the dentist because of being afraid of a dental procedure.

“Our oral health has implications for a lifetime and receiving the proper dental care can influence overall health,” Dr. Dill said. “Be sure to ask questions when obtaining a dental health diagnosis or treatment plan recommendation. Your dentist can explain terms that may be unfamiliar to you, which may be helpful as you make important oral health care decisions.”

For an easy-to-navigate resource on dental terminology, go to the [Glossary of Dental Terms](#) on [www.deltadental.com](http://www.deltadental.com).

#### **About the survey**

*The Adult’s Oral Health & Well-Being Survey was conducted between December 31, 2018, and January 13, 2019, among 1,100 nationally representative Americans ages 18+. The margin of error is +/- 3%.*

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#### **About Delta Dental Plans Association**

Delta Dental Plans Association, based in Oak Brook, Illinois, is the not-for-profit national association of the 39 independent Delta Dental companies. Through these companies, Delta Dental is the nation’s largest provider of dental insurance, covering more than 78 million Americans, and offering the country’s largest dental network with approximately 156,000 participating dentists. In 2017, Delta Dental companies provided more than \$61 million in direct and in-kind community outreach support to improve the oral health of adults, children and infants in local communities across the country. For more information, visit: [deltadental.com](http://deltadental.com).

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