

# Inside This Issue

- 1 Adapting to Better Serve You: Our Evolution Over the Years
- 2 Is Saltwater a Hydration Hack or Health Hazard?
- 3 Buddha's Tooth: A Mystical Relic? Skillet Chicken Pot Pie
- 4 Use Thiago's Story as a Reminder for Elevator Safety

## THE HEROIC ACT OF A YOUNG BOY

### How Thiago Saved His Dog From an Elevator Tragedy

As pet owners, you'll do anything in your power to ensure the safety of your four-legged family members — even if that means acting quickly to get them out of harm's way. And 11-year-old Thiago Magalhães had to do just that for his dog, Milú, when she nearly suffered a fatal accident.

Everything was calm as Thiago entered his apartment's elevator on the way to take Milú for a walk. However, he didn't realize that Milú's leash dragged on the ground and got caught in the elevator doors. Suddenly, his furry friend's leash rose as the elevator began descending. Milú was quickly propelled into the air, dangling on what was left of her leash.



Thiago sprang into action and held onto her collar as he attempted to give her enough room to breathe. Thiago himself was even lifted into the air trying to save Milú's life.

Thinking quickly, Thiago fidgeted with Milú's collar until it snapped, causing him and his furry friend to fall. After hitting the button requesting emergency assistance, first responders rushed to the scene to ensure Thiago and Milú were safe.

When speaking to Brazilian outlet G1, Thiago said, "I don't know where I got the courage. I went on impulse." The boy's father, Rodrigo, said, "I was very scared of what happened and realized that the situation was very serious and that it

could have been fatal for both the dog and my son." Fortunately, Thiago and his four-legged companion weren't injured.

Accidents can occur when you least expect it, so it's vital you take preventive measures to ensure the safety of yourself and your pets. If you are traveling with a loyal companion, please remember these elevator safety tips.

- Let people off the elevator before you enter with your dog.
- Keep the leash and your dog close to your side.
- Allow your dog to enter first and hold the door open until you and the leash are safely inside the elevator.

We applaud Thiago for his bravery and hope this story can be a reminder for pet owners everywhere!



## FROM THEN TO NOW

### How Great Smiles Has Evolved to Serve You Better

Our practice has undergone many changes over the years and even since the beginning of this newsletter. Some of those changes were thanks to COVID-19 (and we'll get into that), but others have naturally evolved alongside technology and science. Of course, our highest priority has always been to provide our patients with the highest level of dental care, but really, it's how we provide care that has evolved.

I say this because as this year comes to a close, I can't help but look back and reflect on the previous months — and years. And it's then, when I take a moment to reflect, that I realize just how much we've really changed. Even I'm surprised!

Our most significant shift at Great Smiles is that we've prioritized overall well-being. This realization was driven home by the pandemic because, as we all saw, our underlying health plays more of a role in our lives than we'd ever realized. Conditions like high blood pressure, sleep apnea, asthma, diabetes, and many more made recovering from COVID-19 much harder. After seeing this firsthand, our practice made a deliberate transition to helping our patients not only with their dental needs but also with their overall health needs.

Things like exercise and diet are naturally everyone's initial prescriptions for solving underlying health issues, but many forget that our mouths are the entryways to our entire bodies. Poor oral health has the power to change our metabolism, increase

our risk of heart disease, cancer, and Alzheimer's as well as cause body-wide inflammation. So, yes, we deal with teeth, but your oral health profoundly influences your entire well-being.

The second change we've made is focusing more on preventive care. Again, thanks to COVID-19, we could only see patients with emergencies. These, of course, were extremely painful and costly for them to have fixed. And they also could have been prevented. Now, we're emphasizing the importance of routine dental visits and getting all of our patients on a schedule that works with their needs because preventive care will not only avoid pain but also lower costs.

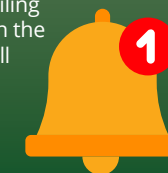
And finally, we've introduced a stronger focus on sleep and temporomandibular disorders (TMD) into our practice. Often, highly stressed people exhibit behaviors like teeth grinding and jaw clenching, which create a host of problems, one being TMDs. TMDs and teeth grinding have been proven to reduce sleep quality and have been associated with sleep apnea. And, as many of us know from experience, poor sleep results in decreased performance throughout the day and increases negative moods such as anger, frustration, and irritability. These are experiences we'd like our patients to avoid.

That's why we're excited to make even bigger strides in the new year to help our patients live happy, healthy, and fulfilling lives — whatever that may look like for

### IMPORTANT NOTICE:

#### OUR DECEMBER HOLIDAY SCHEDULE!

Please be advised that we will be closed after Dec. 22 until the new year. We'll be back to serve you with smiling faces on Tuesday, Jan. 2! In the meantime, we hope you all have a wonderful holiday filled with joy and cherished moments with your loved ones.



them. We're also excited to enlist the support of new technologies, procedures, and regenerative therapies to help us do it.

In fact, we have a new treatment that we're excited to share with you called "platelet-rich fibrin," or PRF treatment. Some of you may have heard of a "platelet-rich plasma," or a PRP treatment before, a procedure where a patient's blood cells are used to accelerate healing in a specific area. PRF is the second generation of PRP treatment, and it's an incredible all-natural tool we can use to help the body heal itself. It has been shown to regenerate injured areas such as the temporomandibular joint (TMJ) ligaments and muscles in the face with no rejection, drug side effects, or surgery involved.

So, here's to all we've learned and all we'll continue to discover in the new year. I look forward to being a proactive participant in your care and will strive to help you become the healthiest, happiest version of yourself!

To your great smiles and better health,



# Sip or Skip? The Truth Behind TikTok's Saltwater Trend

The greatest irony of being lost at sea or shipwrecked is there's water everywhere, but not a drop to drink. We know drinking seawater is harmful, and the dehydration its salt causes makes consuming it worse than drinking nothing at all. So, TikTokers have raised eyebrows with a 2023 trend of drinking saltwater to boost their hydration. Aren't they ignoring a simple rule?

We were taught not to drink seawater during our beach trips as children, and those who disobeyed usually suffered a nasty bout of nausea. While the human body needs sodium, the kidneys can only process the mineral slowly. Since seawater is exceptionally salty, consuming it causes people to urinate more than they drink. They will become thirsty and increasingly dehydrated without adding potable water back into the mix.

The saltwater touted by online influencers is different; people on TikTok mostly add a pinch of table salt to their water before drinking it. The good news is that following this practice will result in a much lower sodium intake than consuming seawater. It's undoubtedly less dangerous than filling up your water bottle in the ocean, but that doesn't necessarily mean the practice is safe or effective.

According to influencers touting the practice, drinking homemade saltwater will improve rather than upset your



hydration levels. Table salt is primarily made of sodium and chloride, electrolytes that help deliver water to our bodies' cells more efficiently. That's why sports drinks that contain electrolytes are a better way to resolve mild dehydration than water alone.

However, dietitian Frances Largeman-Roth recently wrote in "Today" that very few people need the levels of electrolyte replenishment that saltwater offers. While we can lose significant sodium during intense exercise with excessive sweating, few people work out to those extremes. She argues that the dangers outweigh the benefits for anyone not a professional athlete or training in extreme heat.

Another popular claim holds that drinking saltwater can help remove toxins from our bodies. However, experts note our kidneys and livers already do an excellent job. Further, there is no scientific evidence behind claims that saltwater can remove buildup or parasites from our digestive tract.

Meanwhile, the theory that saltwater can "flush" your system is technically true, but not for the right reasons. Saltwater can cause stomach contractions and act as a laxative. If your doctor recommends saltwater as a natural treatment for constipation, follow their instructions carefully. Otherwise, experts say it's best to stick to more traditional remedies.

However, not all is lost if you have hopes for the saltwater craze. There may be one legitimate health use for the product — though, crucially, it does not involve drinking anything. Some people notice smoother, less oily skin after swimming in the ocean. Many people with oily or acne-prone skin benefit from the drying effects of applying it to their skin, and there's even evidence it could provide relief for people with eczema or psoriasis.

Notably, saltwater should not be considered a stand-alone cure for acne, psoriasis, or eczema, and anyone seeing a dermatologist should check with their doctor before incorporating new products into their skin care routine. But if you're dying to get in on the latest fad, applying saltwater to your skin is the best way to do so without compromising your health.

# THE JAW-DROPPING JOURNEY OF BUDDHA'S TOOTH

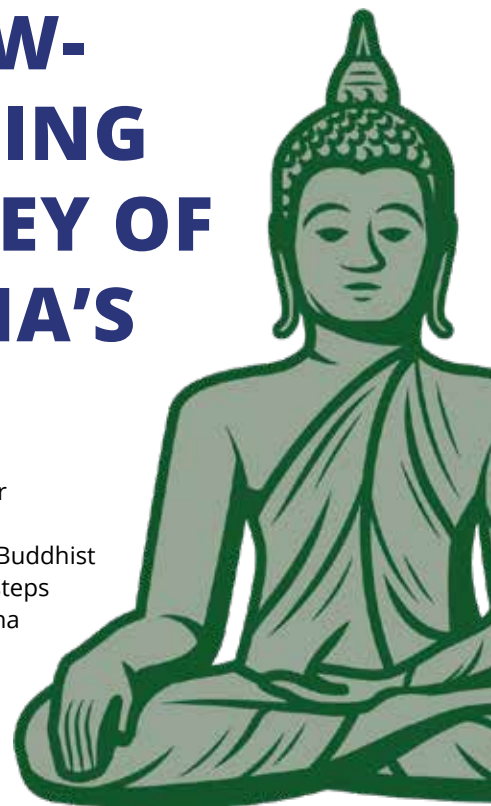
Many parents keep their children's baby teeth as keepsakes, but ancient Buddhist followers went several steps further. When Siddhartha Gautama, the founder of Buddhism, died more than 2,000 years ago, his followers divided his ashes. A left canine tooth was among Gautama Buddha's remains and preserved as a holy object by believers. Local legend says the tooth was eventually gifted to the Sri Lankan monarchy, which was tasked with protecting it.

For centuries, various rulers passed the tooth among themselves and trusted subjects for safekeeping. Some believed the power of the tooth was so strong that whoever held it was the true king. When one rival attempted to steal the artifact, believers credited his failure to Buddha's will. However, it does not appear that possession of the tooth was ever a genuine method of determining succession in the Sri Lankan monarchy.

The first Sri Lankan king constructed a temple to house the tooth in the 1500s. Hundreds of years later, the tooth sits in its fourth home after the first three temples were destroyed. The Temple of Sacred Tooth in Sri Lanka was built in the 1700s and remains a popular tourist attraction and place of worship. The intricate, historical architecture attempts to do justice to the holiness of the artifact inside.

Believe it or not, the tooth in Sri Lanka is not the only tooth Buddhists worship. Singapore houses another tooth in the Buddhist Tooth Relic Temple. The apparent molar was rediscovered in 1980 after being hidden in solid gold for safekeeping. Legend says many people have attempted to destroy the tooth over the years, but every attempt shattered the tools instead of Buddha's remains.

While the stories and temples are elaborate, the provenance of Buddha's teeth is in question. Experts argue that they are too large to be human. However, devotees believe the teeth kept growing over the years due to Buddha's immense power. If you are ever in Singapore or Sri Lanka, it's worth visiting one of the elaborate temples to decide for yourself.



# Skillet Chicken Pot Pie

Inspired by TheModernProper.com



## Ingredients

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup sliced celery
- 2 cups sliced carrots
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp pepper
- 1/2 tsp celery seed
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 cup milk
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 2 cups peas
- 4 cups cooked chicken
- 1 package frozen puff pastry, thawed
- 1 egg

## Directions

1. Heat oven to 425 F.
2. In 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium heat, melt butter, then add onion, celery, and carrots. Sauté for 5 minutes.
3. Add flour, salt, pepper, celery seed, and garlic powder to pan and stir. Sauté for 2 minutes. Slowly incorporate milk.
4. Add stock and bring to a simmer, whisking until mixture thickens. Add peas and chicken.
5. Roll out pastry sheet into 16-inch square on floured surface. Cut into 3-inch squares and place overlapping onto chicken mixture.
6. In a small bowl, whisk egg with 1 tbsp water. Brush egg over pastry and place in oven for 25 minutes or until golden and bubbling.

# Take a Break



- Backpack
- Books
- Daffodil
- Festival
- Friends
- Harvest
- Learning
- Meteor
- Produce
- Smores
- Sunscreen
- Yardwork