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To: jparnell@oralhealthkansas.org
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ORAL HEALTH KANSAS
Weekly Wednesday Update

*Our Mission:
To improve oral health
in Kansas through
advocacy,
public awareness
and education.*

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Oral Health and Overall Health
From the Virginia Oral Health Coalition

Oral health and overall health are fundamentally

Deadline Change in Planning for a Health Benefits Exchange

The Kansas Health Benefits Exchange Steering Committee met on December 1. During the meeting, Steering Committee members (including Oral Health Kansas staff) discussed the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services decision to extend the deadline for states to apply for one of two types of Exchange implementation grants. Both types of grants now are due on June 29, 2012. The change in deadlines opens the very real possibility that the U.S. Supreme Court will rule on the states' challenge to the Affordable Care Act before the grants are due. A Level One grant requires the Governor's signature, and a Level Two grant requires legislative action.

The move in the deadline for the Level One grant from December 2011 to June 2012 leaves the door open a bit for the possibility of a Kansas-based Exchange or partnership with the federal government.

Read more about the implications of the change in the deadline in this article from the Kansas Health Institute [HERE](#)

Cold and Flu Season is Here

Now that it is cold and flu season, many of us will suffer from a cold or the flu. One of the most important things to remember to not get sick again is to replace your toothbrush, after you have been sick. Germs can remain on the bristles of your toothbrush long after

intertwined. The following links present current research on how oral health affects other health conditions in the body, including:

- [Fat loss and improved gum disease](#)
- [Dental screenings and lower heart disease](#)
- [Oral health in diabetic patients and heart disease/cancer risk](#)

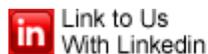
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you have been sick. By using the same toothbrush you used while you were sick, you run the risk of prolonging your sickness or it returning shortly after you are well. It is important to always keep a spare toothbrush around the house just in case you need it.

Here are a few tips to protect your tooth brush from bacteria:

- Wash your hands before and after brushing your teeth. It is important to wash before so that you are not transferring any germs from your hands to your mouth, and it is equally important to wash them after brushing to ensure that you don't transfer the germs from your mouth to others.
- Allow your toothbrush to air dry completely between uses. It is the oxygen that can kill the germs and bacteria that can grow on your toothbrush when it is wet.
- It is best to store your toothbrush in an upright position so that that water in the bristles can drain, as well as the oxygen to flow through the bristles killing the bacteria that can be growing.
- Replace your toothbrush every 3-4 months or sooner if needed. Bristles that are worn down are not as effective in cleaning your teeth and they can actually damage your teeth.

If you have an idea, story or suggestion for a Oral Health Kansas Weekly Wednesday Update please send an email to jparnell@oralhealthkansas.org



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