

HAND TREMORS CUT BACK ON CAFFEINE B12

# MIND & BODY

## Smile, as toothless folk bite back

More older people are seeking treatment to replace missing teeth and regain their sparkle



Joyce Teo

A lesson that deep-sea fishing enthusiast S.H. Seah, 72, learnt after he started wearing dentures was this: "If you're going to vomit on a boat, better take out your dentures." Otherwise, you risk losing them, said the retiree. His wife, 70, a senior radiographer, had warned him to take care of his teeth when he was young, but he eventually lost them because of tooth decay and gum problems. Their daughter, 33, is a senior market researcher. Mr Seah started wearing partial dentures at the age of 30 and full dentures at 50. "I have done bridges before but they soon collapsed," he said of the false teeth. Getting dental implants meant he had to undergo bone grafting, which he did not want. Dentures thus became his only choice. He has no regrets though. "In the past, with my real teeth, I often had toothache. I couldn't eat high-fibre or chewy food." He now enjoys food like cuttlefish and fish head curry, as well as all kinds of fruit or vegetables. "Now, I can play golf, go deep-sea fishing, talk to people and sing karaoke." Like Mr Seah, more older people are becoming aware of the impor-

tance of getting dental treatment to replace their missing teeth. A recent study of about 5,000 Singaporeans aged 60 or above found that three in 10 people in this age group have no teeth. Most of these toothless people use dentures, it said. While new treatments have surfaced, dentures are still common as they are the cheapest option. A check with the National Dental Centre Singapore (NDCS) showed that 2,127 patients received denture treatment there last year. "Compared to 1,697 patients in 2014 and 1,414 patients in 2011, this is a significant increase," said Dr Valerie Tey Hwee Shinn, a registrar at the prosthodontic unit of the NDCS department of restorative dentistry. The Community Health Assist Scheme and Pioneer Generation subsidies, which were launched in 2012 and 2014, are likely the main contributing factors for this increase. Demand for the pricier implant treatments at NDCS - fewer than 550 last year - has been fairly constant in the past five years, she said. Dr Tay Chong Meng, an associate consultant at the University Dental Cluster, National University Hospital, said there is an estimated 10 per cent increase over the past year in the number of older people seeking treatment to replace lost teeth. People in their 60s tend to be more willing to try implants, while those in their 70s and older are more conservative and prefer dentures, he added.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF S.H. SEAH

A check with three private dental clinics also showed that more older people are seeking treatment for missing teeth. However, their patients want the pricier treatments. Dr Lynette Ng, the clinical director and prosthodontist at The Dental Studio, said about half of its older patients choose implants, which last longer than dentures. Dr Ho Kok Sen, an oral and maxillofacial surgeon with Specialist Dental Group, said that as people become more affluent and educated, they are more aware of how replacement teeth can help maintain their quality of life. Missing teeth not only affects

CHEW ON THIS

**In the past, with my real teeth... I couldn't eat high-fibre or chewy food. Now, I can play golf, go deep-sea fishing, talk to people and sing karaoke.**



MRS.S.H. Seah (above), 72, a retiree and deep-sea fishing enthusiast

one's appearance but, more importantly, it also affects one's comfort and ability to do daily tasks. "When one has missing teeth, especially a row of them, the ability to articulate clearly and audibly is impaired," said Dr Ho. "If the back teeth are missing, it affects the ability to chew, forcing one to go on a soft diet and possibly give up eating fibrous food or crunchy fruits." Missing teeth can also sometimes cause discomfort. Dr Jerry Lim of Orchard Scotts Dental said a patient in her 50s, who lived with no upper back molars for several years, suffered

from headaches and neck pain. When he saw her, her jaw line had changed due to the loss of support from the back teeth. She was treated with implants, which restored her dental function and improved her appearance. Those who still have teeth should visit the dentist regularly and practise good oral hygiene every day. "Many people assume that there's no problem if they don't feel pain," said Dr Lim. "And even when they experience pain, they assume that once it goes away, they won't need to see the dentist." However, that is when the dental problem becomes more severe. For instance, gum disease, which is caused by a build-up of plaque on the teeth, causes no pain in the beginning. But when the pain comes, it may be too late to save your teeth. Dr Lim said: "Gum problems are on the rise as we are living longer and keeping our teeth longer." Dr Tay said no tooth replacement option should be regarded as permanent. "All prostheses require maintenance and have a lifespan determined by the quality of that maintenance," he added. Technical complications can occur with dental implant replacements, while dentures and bridges have to be replaced over time. To avoid losing their teeth, Dr Tay added, people should take good care of their teeth and gums. Natural teeth are by far the best, as they are meant to last a lifetime if one takes good care of them. joyceteo@sph.com.sg SEE MIND&BODY B13

### Healthier Choices For A Healthier Lifestyle With F&N

Increasingly aware of the importance of a wholesome diet and regular exercise, more consumers are aspiring to lead a healthier lifestyle. F&N continues to anticipate and meet fast-changing needs by introducing delicious and nutritious beverages, and collaborating with strategic partners.

As consumers become more health-conscious and seek healthier food and beverage choices, F&N continues to embrace its philosophy of "Pure Enjoyment, Pure Goodness" with a diverse range of healthier beverages that also taste good.

From isotonic drinks (100PLUS) to milk (MAGNOLIA), soya milk (NutriSoy), traditional Asian brews (NutriWell), fruit juices (Fruit Tree Fresh) and coconut water (Coco Life), F&N offers a wide variety of healthier drinks in reduced-sugar, no-sugar added or low-fat variants that are easily identified by the Healthier Choice Symbol.

As the platinum sponsor of the Healthy Lifestyle Festival SG 2016, F&N has prepared a series

of exciting activities during the month-long festival, which culminates with a grand anchor event from 12 to 13 November at the Singapore Sports Hub and Kallang Wave Mall.

Apart from inviting visitors to sample the tasty goodness of its products with the Healthier Choice Symbol, F&N has created a slew of fun activities to motivate people to "Get Active", "Eat Smart" and "Cook Healthy".

Visitors are also encouraged to experience the active lifestyle at the 100PLUS booth, an activity that encapsulates 100PLUS' philosophy of "Let's Move".

Join F&N to get active, eat smart and cook healthy at the Healthy Lifestyle Festival SG!



**Cook Healthy with NutriSoy**  
Visitors with a passion for cooking, or who simply enjoy the pleasure of eating, will relish the NutriSoy Cooking Demonstration by Chef Melvyn Lee on 13th November, from 2 to 3pm. The celebrity chef will show you how to cook Salmon Brown Rice Pasta with NutriSoy - a healthier and delicious dish that you and your family can enjoy!



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### A Balanced Life Starts With Wellness From Within

They are dynamos at work and multi-taskers at home, striving hard to achieve work-life balance. Women nowadays juggle multiple hats. Yet, they continue to glow and radiate confidence as they embrace daily challenges. Two working mums share their secret of looking and feeling good.

To keep herself in the pink of health, senior manager and mother of a two-year old boy Angela Hing pays close attention to what she eats. Like what her grandmother and mother used to do, she balances her diet with the goodness of traditional Asian brews.

However, with her time strapped lifestyle, she opts to buy conveniently packaged brews off the supermarket shelves, instead of spending hours to brew a drink.

Her choice is simple - F&N NutriWell Snow Fungus with Wolfberry.

Angela quips, "F&N NutriWell Snow Fungus with Wolfberry is very convenient and saves me a lot of time as I don't have to brew my own tea. All I need to

do is take it out from the fridge and pour into a glass. It tastes refreshing and perks me up."

Using quality ingredients, the refreshing F&N NutriWell Snow Fungus with Wolfberry offers freshly brewed goodness without added preservatives or colouring. Another thumbs up - it is certified as Healthier Choice by Health Promotion Board, with 25% less sugar.

An ardent fan of NutriWell, Emily Kew works in the frontline in a fast-paced industry. She feels that it is important to look good amidst the stress to cope with work and family commitments.

Emily shares, "As a working mum, I have to be in peak form all the time. And at times when

I feel worn out from juggling work and family, I turn to NutriWell Snow Fungus for that nourishing boost. After that, I feel refreshed and revitalised to face my clients at work."

Clearly, there is every reason to try the freshly brewed F&N NutriWell Snow Fungus with Wolfberry today! It's available in handy 475ml for a quick perk-me-up and family sized 1-litre packs for gatherings.

Freshly brewed for wellness within.

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