



A PRE-DENTAL GUIDE TO DENTAL SCHOOL

# Leeway Space



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## ***A Message from the Newsletter Committee***

Our names are Guiselle and Stephanie and we are the 2020-2021 chairs for the UCLA ASDA Newsletter Committee. Typically, we serve as editors in chief for The Diastema, UCLA's biannual publication written by dental students, but we're happy to present you its pre-dental counterpart, Leeway Space! For this year's editions of Leeway Space, we decided to take a new approach and give pre-dental students the unique opportunity to craft the newsletter from start to finish. We're so proud of the pre-dental team that has taken on this immense project; they've not only written all of the articles, but have served on their own pre-dental newsletter committee headed by pre-dental Editors-in-Chief to manage all aspects of editing, designing, writing, and publishing. While we wish we could take credit as mentors, their self-sufficiency and proactiveness has truly made their achievements their own. We hope you enjoy the hard work they have put in and are equally excited to witness what they have created!

*Warmly,*

*Guiselle Murillo & Stephanie Peacock*

*UCLA ASDA Newsletter Committee Chairs*



## ***A Message from the Pre-Dental Committee***

As second year dental students at UCLA and Co-Chairs of the ASDA Predental Outreach Committee, we want to welcome you to the Fall 2020 issue of Leeway Space! We have an incredible group of predental students located all around the world who volunteered to coordinate, write and edit this issue to make reading this issue a possibility. We want to give a special thank you to them, and to you as a reader, as you learn about more opportunities here to use towards your journey to dental school.

We were once in your shoes not too long ago, so we know how much it can help to be pointed in the right direction with dental resources to help you achieve your goal of acceptance. That's why we are so proud of Leeway Space, a newsletter for pre-dentals by pre-dentals - pre-dentals who are involved in a variety of dental opportunities and have advice, experiences, and wisdom to share with you. We know that during these unprecedented times, it can be tough to connect with other pre-dentals and gain new dental experiences. We hope that by reading Leeway Space, you can find new ways to be involved in dentistry and learn from what other pre-dentals are doing during these difficult times. From the stories that you read from this issue, we hope that you can partake in the opportunities that ASDA has to offer and perhaps write for one of our future issues!

*Alexa Williamson & Elizabeth Le*

*UCLA ASDA Predental Outreach Committee Co-Chairs*



# A MESSAGE FROM THE *Editors in Chief*

Dear Readers,

We are ecstatic to present to you Volume 5: Issue 2 of our student-run Leeway Space pre-dental newsletter! Pre-dental voices from different institutions around the world have come together to share with you their narratives, perspectives and experiences. Acknowledging the different and challenging times that our world is currently facing, we want to provide motivation and empowerment to all pre-dental students through these inspiring stories. In this issue you will read about topics ranging from advocacy, specialty and community service experiences, to DAT study tips and more!

We initially learned about Leeway Space through UCLA's undergraduate pre-dental organization: Pre-Dental Student Outreach Program (PDSOP), where we both signed up to be writers and share our pre-dental experiences at Care Harbor. We had the unique opportunity to learn from other pre-dentals, and both of us were able to connect with UCLA dental students. When the opportunity arose to work with Leeway Space for the next two editions, both of us were eager to join the Leeway Space Team again, and so grateful to then be chosen as editors in chief.



As editors in chief, we were thrilled to experience Leeway Space from a leadership perspective and work closely with pre-dental students to create intriguing content. Fostering collaboration and communication among pre-dental students was an enjoyable and enlightening experience for us, as we were always eager to engage with their stories, view the newest graphic designs and learn about the unique process of publishing a newsletter.

We are so proud of our Leeway Space Team and of the Fall magazine we have created together through the aggregation of diverse pre-dental perspectives and creativity. We hope you enjoy the fruition of our dedicated and hardworking team, and we wish you the best in your pre-dental journey!

Kindly,

*Jessica Mele*     *Maria Bello Carrillo*

Jessica Mele and Maria Bello Carrillo  
Leeway Space Editors-in-Chief







# Meet the Pre-Dental Newsletter Team

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# Advocacy in Dentistry: Beyond the Clinic Walls

*Article by: Artin Ardjmand*

## *When imagining a dentist...*

you picture an individual wearing scrubs and loupes, cleaning teeth, teaching you how to floss your teeth, and reminding you to stop eating so much candy. However, dentists' duties do not just reside within the walls of the clinics where they practice. In fact, the power that dentists hold goes beyond just hands-on oral care; they play an integral role in political advocacy.



Dental professionals, as a united front, are capable of advancing oral health issues that reside within their local communities as well as pushing for issues that affect the dental profession itself. The American Dental Association (ADA) is a home for like-minded dentists to come together to address these matters. As a united front, dentists work to promote advancements such as water fluoridation, healthcare reform, the need for PPE for dentists during Coronavirus, student debt management, and more. The ADA takes stances on a plethora of issues, whether it is expanding prevention and education, or working with lawmakers on dental benefit coverages. Ultimately, the goal is to better the quality of life for Americans and dentists alike. Without their zealous work, the field of dentistry would not have progressed to its extent today.

Although dentistry as a health sector has advanced, there is always room for further improvement. How do we make these improvements? For one, advocacy and involvement in the political process is vital because the decisions made by Congress have a direct effect on patients and dental practices. Therefore, dentists showing up and vocalizing their concerns, such as how legislation should address the opioid crisis, gives dentists a platform and the ability to shape America's oral health.

Getting involved with dental advocacy can take place early in the pathway to dentistry, even while one is still an undergraduate student. Students are the future of the dental field and therefore should ensure they remain educated on current health-related subjects. Specifically, I find it crucial to remain knowledgeable on the health disparities many individuals face. Being cognizant of the socioeconomic barriers to receiving healthcare allows individuals to take action as future dental students and dentists in order to minimize this gap. Furthermore, it is crucial to review legislation, write to elected officials, and educate the general public. Students and dentists alike can participate in public policy by doing any of such; they can even take it a step further by lobbying in D.C. and attending national meetings. This is by no means a comprehensive list, but just a select few ways individuals can have a lasting impact on the healthcare of others.

Even as pre-dental students, it is imperative to stay connected to the field of dentistry since we will soon be at the forefront of these issues. Whether it is through reading up on a dental topic that interests you, or joining a health-related advocacy committee, taking initiative now will allow you to utilize your power as a dentist to better serve the community later on.



**Atrin Ardjmand**  
UCLA '20



# Healthy Teeth, Healthy Body: Dental Public Health From a Pre-Dental Student's Perspective



Article by Nikki Parikh  
University of the Pacific '22

There are twelve dental specialties currently recognized by the American Dental Association, one of which stands out in a unique way. While most branches of dentistry work in a clinical setting, Dental Public Health (DPH) takes a broader approach. According to the American Dental Association, dental public health is

*"The science and art of preventing and controlling dental diseases and promoting dental health through organized community efforts"*

This specialty works at the community level; DPH professionals use their skills to advance dental public education by collecting data on a subset of the general population and developing services/policies that cater to those epidemiological needs. Community water fluoridation and school sealant programs are examples of effective initiatives that have been established to meet specific needs of the population of interest.

The field of dental public health also relies on the community itself, as oral health programs are implemented and overseen by dental providers, local health agencies, and public health administrators. The aggregation of these initiatives consolidates the fields of science, education, and advocacy, resulting in the basis of the global level of dental public health. Major areas of interest of DPH on this greater scale include the control and prevention of oral disease, as well as better and equal access to oral healthcare.

As a pre-dental volunteer at the 2020 "Give Kids a Smile" event, hosted by the San Joaquin Dental Society, I got to see firsthand how dentists and DPH professionals work together to serve the community. Underserved children arrived to receive free dental care in the form of screenings, cleanings, extractions, fillings, and root canals. While patients were waiting to receive their treatment, volunteers, like myself, kept the children engaged through various educational, fun activities centered around good oral hygiene practices. Around 100 local kids were cared for and educated that day, an indication of a highly successful event. In providing preventative and restorative treatment to disadvantaged children, "Give Kids a Smile" emphasizes the importance of dental public health in improving access to oral healthcare by drawing attention to obstacles that prevent people from receiving basic dental treatments.

Insufficient funds, language barriers, patient fear, and low health literacy are a few of the many obstacles that give rise to oral health disparities. UCLA SIDE (Students for Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity) & UCLA ASDA Virtual Lecture Series explain that "Oral health disparities are not merely the differences in oral health status between the social classes, but are a recognition of power differentials related to factors such as race and ethnicity, socio-demographic disparities, and psychological factors that can shape the biology and behaviors related to oral disease development and progression." By integrating preventive measures and empowering community members with education on how to take control of their dental health, DPH seeks to reduce these disparities and support oral health. After all, oral health is integral for the general health of an individual. The community of bacteria in the mouth, both good and bad, are associated with health issues including diabetes and cardiovascular disease, among several others.

Taking into consideration the relationship between disproportionately high rates of untreated gum disease and dental caries, as well as systemic diseases and chronic health conditions in underprivileged communities, it is evident that dental public health plays an essential role in preventing disease and promoting overall well being.



All this research on the broad impact of dental public health opens doors for pre-dental students to get involved. Many community-based nonprofits usually accept local student volunteers to lend a helping hand. Nursing homes and public schools in disadvantaged areas often benefit from sustainable oral health education programs, which could be an undertaking for undergrad pre-dental associations. "Give Kids a Smile" and other similar events offer a great way for students to help DPH professionals and observe their work in action. Regardless of the avenue, taking part in a dental public health initiative is an enriching way to explore and contribute to the global dental community.



# Creating Smiles While Serving the Community



**Article by Jennifer Alvarado**  
CSUF '19

During my freshman year of college, I knew I wanted to pursue a career in dentistry, because I wanted to educate my community about the importance of oral care and provide them treatment. Although I had yet to become a dentist, I was still determined to volunteer in the dental community to help make a difference. Many pre-dental students are interested in volunteering, but are not aware of the opportunities available to them or are unsure of whether they have the time to commit. Volunteering can seem overwhelming, especially while attending school and working, but it can also be a very rewarding experience.

Volunteering allows those that are more fortunate to provide needed services that would otherwise be unavailable to underserved communities. Regarding the dental community, many struggle with obtain dental insurance or pay for treatments themselves, and are forced to neglect their oral health entirely. Providing communities like these with opportunities to receive free services allows volunteers to fill the gaps in resources and strengthen their communities. You may be thinking to yourself,

**“Yes, dentists can provide the community with free services, but what can I do as a pre-dental student?”**

Not having a DDS/DMD should not stop us from volunteering. We can help by educating our patients on proper oral care, preparing dental kits, helping with examinations and procedures, and raising awareness through fundraising.

If you are interested in volunteering, there are many dental organizations that hold annual community events and are always looking for volunteers. Within the Los Angeles and Orange County communities, some organizations include the California Dental Association (CDA), American Dentists Care Foundation (ADCF), American Dental Association (ADA), Share Our Selves (S.O.S), and many more. A few of the largest events that are always in need of volunteers include CDA's "CDA Cares," ADA's "Give Kids a Smile," and the S.O.S Community Health Center.

In addition to these popular events, there are also many dental clinics that volunteer their time distributing dental health kits, informational packets, and performing oral health screenings and preventative care at elementary schools, children fairs, nursing homes, and homeless shelters. If you are interested in shadowing or working at a dental office and want to also volunteer, it is a great idea to look for an office that is involved in their community. Whether you are a dental assistant or not, you can always help by charting patient information, setting up instruments, preparing the workspace for the dentist, translating if you are bilingual, and answering questions or concerns new patients may have.

If you haven't done so already, don't forget to ask about the clubs available at your school. Chances are that your campus has a pre-dental club, and this is a great way to get started with volunteering. I was part of my pre-dental club at CSUF and it was a great experience because I was able to volunteer at dental outreach events happening in my community, alongside many of my friends. Volunteering on campus is an easy way to get started. You can attend health fairs, school events, or sports tournaments to provide oral health screenings for your schoolmates. Additionally, don't feel the need to limit yourself to the community events that are already established; feel free to create your own volunteering events that are geared toward your own interests. Another form of volunteering is participating in mission trips to help marginalized communities in countries abroad. Being able to travel while volunteering and helping others can be particularly enticing; however, remember to keep the cost of participation in mind, as such programs can be quite expensive.

Along with helping our communities, volunteering allows pre-dental students to make social connections. Volunteers are able to interact with people from all walks of life that have different backgrounds, interests, and goals. Taking the time to volunteer has the added benefit of putting life's problems into perspective and recognizing where one should be grateful for what they have. As someone who is a dental assistant on the path to becoming a dentist, I feel that it is my duty to volunteer in my community as much as I can. With this in mind, it is always important to remember to maintain a balance between school, work, and volunteering. If you're just getting started, start off small, and participate in some events once in a while. As your interests increase, aim to incorporate volunteering events into your schedule more often. Remember to always make time for everything that is important to you, and do not overwhelm yourself. Never forget that volunteering makes a difference, and by helping at least one person, you have succeeded.





# The Ultimate Pre-Dental Experience



**Article by Olivia Taylor Foggie**  
University of South Carolina '21

*Most college students have been asked a variation of the same question:*

## What has been your best experience in undergrad?

There are many joyful moments to consider: student section game days, late night trips to the cafe with friends, or simply having a newfound sense of freedom on campus. Some find their time in the library to be of utmost importance, for others it's their experience as a research assistant. Personally, I consider dedicating my time to being involved with student organizations as my most valuable experience.

Being a freshman on a larger campus can be startling, especially at a university that is home to over 30,000 students. Maneuvering through your first year of college often feels like you're tasked with completing a treasure hunt with no map. At first, I spent a lot of my time in my university's Office of Pre-Professional Advising, talking with my pre-health advisor about the right path for me and my pre-dental journey. Immediately, I was provided with a checklist of things I needed to accomplish in the next four years before it came time to apply to dental school, but I didn't want to stop at just checking things off a list. Ultimately, I found that I wanted to be heavily involved on campus and within my community, while concentrating on dentistry.

After searching through my school's organization directory, I was convinced that my place was Delta Delta Sigma (DDS), the only honors pre-dental organization on my campus. This organization is dedicated to the education, enrichment, and empowerment of pre-dental students by increasing exposure to the field of dentistry, developing leadership skills, advising, and serving the community. DDS began as a shared vision between our founding members to create a pre-dental community that fosters leadership and camaraderie among students who share the goal of joining the dental profession.

Through this organization, I have witnessed an abundance of growth not only within myself, but also in my pre-dental peers.

Networking with dental students and other pre-dentals, D1-D4 dental student panels, and events with our local dental school were just a few of the benefits offered. DDS is closely connected to the local dental school, Medical University of Southern Carolina (MUSC), who hosts an annual Dental and Impressions Day for DDS members and others. During some of our biweekly chapter meetings, manual dexterity activities like origami, painting, and soap carving are incorporated so we can improve fine motor skills while also receiving helpful information and advice pertaining to the pre-dental track: upcoming dental school events, professional dental speakers, and volunteer, enrichment, or shadowing opportunities. A mentoring program was also implemented recently, where current members are paired with the new incoming class in order to foster relationships and provide support to each other throughout our dental journeys.

My favorite pre-dental experience from my involvement with DDS was attending the 2020 ASDA District 4 Annual Conference in Greenville, SC. Through this experience, I was able to network, gain valuable knowledge on specialties within the dental field, learn ways to limit debt upon graduation, and adopt attributes to become a more competitive applicant when applying to dental school. This opportunity led me to become an ASDA pre-dental member!

Since being inducted as a member of DDS in my freshman year, my love for dentistry has only grown. I have formed many close relationships with like-minded individuals who share the common goal of becoming a dentist. The people you meet in your pre-dental club might be the people you attend dental school with and your colleagues later in life. If you're interested in dentistry or learning more about the dental profession, I highly recommend reaching out to your local pre-dental society/club/organization on your campus to get involved!

# The Pre-Dental Juggle



**Article by Michelle Steinberg**

University of California Los Angeles '21

Shadowing hours, DAT studying, a science-heavy course load, extracurriculars, volunteering, oh my! Our calendars fill up faster than you can say periodontal ligament. Life as a pre-dental student is a juggling act, constantly balancing our responsibilities as a student, aspiring dentist, and young adult. So, what is the secret to managing it all?

As a freshman, I was eager and excited to get involved on my college campus. My eyes widened as I entered the annual club fair, showcasing the infinite amount of extracurriculars at my university. Research! Community Service! Clinical Experience! Yes, yes, and yes! I grabbed flyers like they were candy and handed my email out to any club member who asked. My inbox was getting the most attention it had ever seen!

I soon realized that joining every club or extracurricular, while enticing, was simply not feasible. Club meetings conflicted with review sessions, homework trumped social events, and my calendar was screaming for a break. I had taken too much food onto my plate; it was getting increasingly difficult to manage. I had entered a new, foreign playing field – college – and I would need to adjust, change my habits, and find a balance. I had gotten a taste of the pre-dental juggle, and I wasn't prepared to back down from the challenge: I was ready to overcome it.

**The big question is:**

***How? How do you manage the juggle?***

An organic chemistry exam, a twelve-page paper, weekends shadowing at a dental clinic, a practice DAT exam, a club meeting...

This same question boggled my mind. As a pre-dental freshman, I would look at the seniors in awe, thinking they must have cracked the code to make it through these four years.

Now, as a senior, I confess that this is not the case. Yes, everyone is juggling, balancing responsibilities with requirements, but every juggle looks and feels slightly different. For this reason, there is no one universal solution.

I know that this is not the satisfying answer you had hoped for, but let me share with you some elements to my solution – a solution that took many rounds of trial, error, and patience to arrive at, and it's still not entirely infallible. Perhaps it will inspire you, helping you to arrive at your own unique solution.



**Working out, getting active, and breaking a sweat.** Giving myself one hour a day to reset and recharge. One hour to prioritize my mental health. Before I entered the pre-dental world in college, I never visited a gym – not once. At first, I was hesitant. I told myself that I belonged in the library, not on a treadmill. I felt overwhelmed with tasks, convinced that there was simply no time in the day to take a break. With time, exercising became an essential part of my daily routine. An hour break to go for a walk, run, or take a workout class was the perfect antidote. Reserving this time to myself and my mental health was transformational, improving my attitude and helping me to stay focused, positive, and confident while juggling.



**Diversifying extracurriculars.** Having a balance in my involvement outside of the classroom helps to reinforce and ensure a healthy balance in my free time. By diversifying what I am involved in, from pre-dental clubs to other extracurriculars, I have had the opportunity to network with other pre-dental students, gain clinical exposure, and learn more about the dental field, but I also have outlets to pursue my passions for volunteering and student engagement.



**Planning the upcoming week on Sunday night.** Similar to my exposure to the gym, I had never used a planner until college. I took each day as it came and remembered the important due dates. I quickly learned that this would not be the case in college – the exams, homework, meetings, and calls piled up, and I knew my memory could no longer be relied upon. I spent my Sunday nights outlining my to-do's, providing myself with a clear picture of the week ahead. My tasks always seemed a bit more manageable once they'd been organized, prioritized, and scheduled.

“

**I might not be a master juggler, performing solo acts in the Big Apple Circus, but I am a pre-dental student, and that's pretty close.**

# ESSENTIAL STRATEGIES TO STUDY FOR THE DAT



Article by Celeste Nguyen  
University of California Los Angeles '22

## FOR IMPROVEMENT

The DAT can be a daunting experience for any pre-dental. Personally, I studied about 3 months for at least 4 days a week, averaging 5 hours a day, but everyone has their own pace! Some study 6 weeks for 7 days a week.

I used DAT Bootcamp, but some other common study materials are Chad's Videos for chemistry; QVault for biology; and DAT Destroyer. Here are some tips and tricks to do your best!

### GENERAL TIPS

#### 1. MINDSET.

Before starting any studying, it is important to have a positive attitude; you can do it! There's a lot to study, but be patient. Being open to learning from mistakes and believing in yourself can be the difference between a good and a great score.

#### 2. ALLOW YOURSELF BREAKS

Do not study 10 hours straight and try to cram information. Instead, do one or two hour sessions before taking a short break (10-20 minutes). Walk around, get a snack, or watch an episode of your favorite show before putting in another few hours. At the end of a productive day, reward yourself with a fun hobby or delicious dinner. These breaks and small rewards will prevent your brain from overloading and are a healthy way to give your body a rest.

#### 3. PRIORITIZE.

The DAT is expensive (\$475!) and the preparation is time-consuming. To save time and money, make studying a priority in your life, for just a couple of months. It is easy to allow other obligations to get in the way, or push it off out of fear, but the DAT is an important part of the application and deserves the attention. Your goal is to take it only once.

#### 4. SET A SCHEDULE AND STICK TO IT.

One way to ensure that studying for the DAT is prioritized is by making a realistic schedule. A 'realistic' schedule is key because making one too ambitious will set yourself up to fall behind in the coming weeks; making one too relaxed will have you scrambling in the final days before the DAT. Two to three months is ample time! Evaluate your obligations for this time period, set aside time every day to study, and stick to it.

#### 5. ASSESS YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Acknowledge your weak points and focus on those. Is it the sciences, PAT, reading comprehension, or quantitative reasoning? Where can you improve within each topic? Sometimes, out of fear or comfort, it is easy to practice what we already know and avoid the topics we don't. Proactively analyze your knowledge to strengthen weak areas by seeing what types of questions you typically get wrong, and work on those.

#### 6. RETAIN INFORMATION FROM PREVIOUS CLASSES

Biology, general chemistry, and organic chemistry are all on the DAT and are also prerequisite courses required by dental schools. While taking these classes, try to understand and retain this information for the DAT. There is a lot of overlap, and remembering information or using study aids from previous classes will save you time in reviewing it a second time.

#### 7. OPPORTUNITIES TO STUDY ARE EVERYWHERE

Incorporate studying into obligations and be opportunistic with your free time, even if it's not much. Flashcards are a great way to study in between or during tasks, especially if you have a flashcard app on your phone. Setting a goal of 200 flashcards per day is a good way to keep accountable. I understand if even a couple hours every day is difficult to set aside, especially with a job, children, or schooling. Another way to study despite commitments is to incorporate it into everyday life. After reviewing the material, try to make connections in whatever you see. Cooking today? What will an increase in temperature do to the bonds?

#### 8. ACRONYMS

There is a lot of material to retain, especially in the sciences. One way to memorize information is through the use of acronyms. The wackier they are, the better!

#### 9. DRILL

Spaced repetition and constant review of weaker areas will help improve scores. Sometimes, practice questions will help you reinforce knowledge better than re-reading and memorizing facts. Avoid compromising practice for more "study" time, especially 1 - 1.5 weeks before your exam.



Altogether, these steps can be put into an acronym (#8!) to easily remember: MAPS A ROAD. I hope this list MAPS A ROAD to an awesome DAT score for you! Lastly, self-care trumps any of the tips listed above. Studying for the DAT will not be easy for anyone, and can be particularly grueling for some. Do not be afraid or ashamed if you need to postpone or retake the DAT. Take time to center yourself and listen to your body. If you are hitting a wall in studying, after focusing on material for hours, take some time to reset. Adjust the schedule if needed, and come back tomorrow rejuvenated and ready to bounce back. Sleep is the best way to consolidate information!

Good luck to all pre-dental students out there! Tackling the DAT is one step closer to ultimately getting into dental school.



Make sure to reach out to your local pre-dental club for special discounts on test prep material

The following questions have been sampled from DAT Bootcamp with the consent of the DAT Bootcamp team. All rights reserved to Ari Creator of DAT Bootcamp (<https://datbootcamp.com>)

### Survey of Natural Sciences Question 1:

How many hydrogen bonds would be present in the following double-stranded DNA molecule?

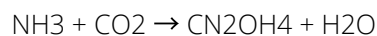
ACCGTGATGC

TGGCACTACG

A.10 B.20 C.26 D.28 E.30

### Survey of Natural Sciences Question 2:

8.5 grams of ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>; 17 g/mol) are reacted to completion according to the following chemical equation:

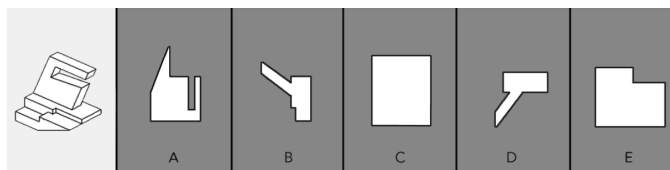


If 7.5 grams of urea (CN<sub>2</sub>OH<sub>4</sub>; 60 g/mol) were obtained, what is the percent yield?

A. 25% B. 33% C. 50% D. 60% E. 88%

## DAT Bootcamp

### PAT Question 3:



### Quantitative Reasoning Question 4:

With a 15% charged cellphone battery, Brian can talk for 45 minutes. If the battery in the phone is fully charged, how long can Brian talk?

A. 4 hours B. 4.25 hours C. 4.5 hours D. 4.75 hours E. 5 hours





*Article by Yesenia Guevara  
University of Colorado Denver '21*



# *Stress and Meditation*

Something both dental patients and pre-dental students may experience is stress. In the dental field, such anxiety may unnecessarily complicate certain procedures or interactions with patients. However, meditation can have a profound impact in a dental office by mitigating stress and anxiety. A meditation session improves mood, helps relax the body, and leads to a more calming office atmosphere.



Meditation originated from the Eastern Indian field of psychology and the belief in monism: the model of a unified body and mind (Singla, 2011). A monistic philosophy emphasizes the idea that the mind has a strong influence on how the body responds to particular situations such as stress. Meditation allows the mind to be at ease as one focuses on relaxation, which in turn alleviates both physical stress on the body and emotional anxiety.

Being able to keep stillness amid chaos can lead to a significant influx in relaxation levels.

A dental visit can provoke a myriad of feelings: anxiety, fear, nervousness, relief, or even excitement. As a dental assistant, I have seen how meditation can play a versatile role in mitigating the uneasy feelings that a patient may experience. I recall a particular instance when I heard the cries of a patient through closed doors and intervened at the dentist's discretion. I instructed the patient to take slow and deep breaths as I took them with him. His shallow breathing turned into deep breaths, and his cries and shaking body turned into tranquility. One, two, three minutes passed and the dentist was then able to continue and finish with the procedure. Meditation helped ease the patient's worries and it became an integral tactic when encountering stressful situations in our office. In general, being able to keep stillness amid chaos, which may present itself during a dental appointment, can lead to a significant influx in relaxation levels.

## *Meditation Guidelines*

1. Schedule time to meditate. During this session, avoid thinking about anything other than relaxing.
2. Find comfortable clothes and a comfortable seat where there will be no distractions.
3. Beginners can start with a guided meditation that can be found anywhere on Google or YouTube.
4. As the guided meditation starts, take slow, deep breaths. In for 4 seconds, hold for 4, out for 4. Fill the stomach up as you inhale, and deflate as you exhale.
5. Many thoughts may attempt to enter your mind during this time, which is normal. Simply acknowledge them, and try not to get distracted by the thought. Pause. Let the thought go as you breathe out, and return to slow, deep breaths. It will probably happen again at a later time, and it is normal. Just return to breathing gently (Gelles, 2013).
6. Follow the guided meditation.
7. Enjoy the rest of your day, now that you are realigned.

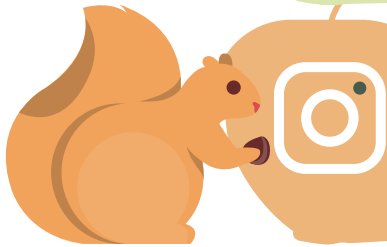
# UPCOMING DATES FOR PRE-DENTAL COMMITTEE EVENTS



**RECURRING:  
(LINK IN INSTAGRAM BIO)**

**UCLA PRE-DENTAL  
MENTORSHIP PROGRAM**

**CALIFORNIA PRE-DENTAL  
LIAISON**



**INSTAGRAM LIVE LAB TUTORIALS:  
WAXING AND Q&A WITH D1S  
1ST WED. OF EVERY MONTH**

**Pre-Dental Month Lecture Series:**

**10/07-10/29**

**GENERAL ADMISSIONS:**

**10/07/20**

**6PM PST**

**NONTRADITIONAL  
STUDENTS-PPID:**

**10/14/20**

**6PM PST**

**UCLA ASDA & LEADERSHIP  
OPPORTUNITIES:**

**10/21/20**

**6PM PST**

**UCLA D1-D4 ALUMNI PANEL:**

**10/29/20**

**6PM PST**

**UCLA SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY VIRTUAL SHADOW DAYS**

**FRIDAYS 11AM- 2PM PST**

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