

## Inside this issue



- p.1 Cheers to You!
- p.2 The FOMO Effect
- p.2 Situation of the Month
- p.3 Are You Taking Too Many Vitamins?
- p.3 Have a Laugh On Us!
- p.3 Apricot and Wild Rice Stuffing
- p.4 How M&Ms Are Saving the Black-Footed Ferret



# Cheers to You!

## Another Successful Year of Community, Education, and Friendship

## SAVING A SPECIES, 3 M&MS AT A TIME

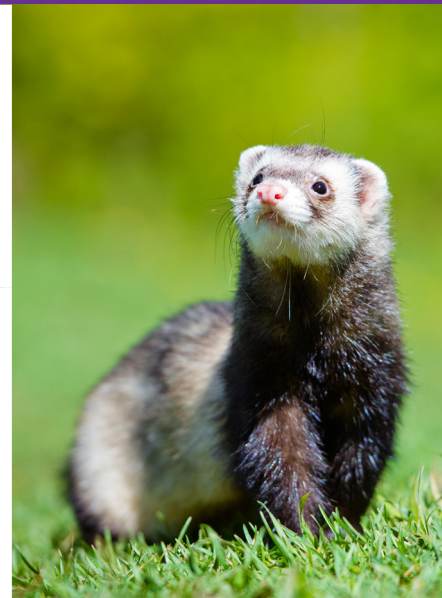
**I**t's estimated that there are about 300 black-footed ferrets left in the wild. The ferret, native to the Great Plains in the U.S., was once thought to have gone extinct. In the 1990s, researchers were able to selectively breed what few remained in captivity. Eventually, they were released back into their native habitat.

Despite recovery efforts over the past few decades, the black-footed ferret population never really took off. Disease, loss of habitat, and hunting have kept the populations low. Now, researchers with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are trying a new way to help the ferrets survive: M&Ms — yes, the candy-coated chocolate treat loved by millions all over the world.

The M&Ms are designed to combat disease, specifically the sylvatic plague. The M&Ms are coated in a special peanut butter mixture that contains a plague vaccine. Using drones described as "glorified gumball machines," researchers can drop the M&Ms over the Great Plains and the scattered habitats of the ferrets and prairie dogs, three M&Ms at a time. Right now, the M&M vaccine project is contained to a small region of Eastern Montana.

Both the black-footed ferrets and their primary food source, the prairie dog, are highly susceptible to the plague. The plague has wreaked havoc on prairie dog populations in the Great Plains, leaving the ferrets without any food or shelter, as the ferrets have a habit of taking over prairie dog burrows. Both animals are vital to the Great Plains ecosystem, especially the prairie dog, which sits at a critical place on the food chain.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist Randy Matchett says the animals find the M&Ms "delicious." If the Montana vaccine trials work, Fish and Wildlife will expand the project to other locations around the Great Plains, ultimately saving the ferrets and the prairie dogs, three M&Ms at a time.



**T**he second annual Pediatric Dental Assistants Association conference was a success! The participants had a great time, and our guest speakers were fantastic. I think all of our attending members left with a better sense of support and purpose, and great reviews are still coming in. Thank you to the amazing group who made the weekend such a hit!

When I started this association, my main objective was to create an atmosphere of respect for pediatric dental assistants. I couldn't help but feel that in some offices, assistants felt almost like second-class citizens, and they weren't receiving recognition for their hard work. Assistants are often the most important cog in the wheel in pediatric dental offices, because they spend the most time with the kids and are sometimes the biggest reason kids look forward to coming back to see us. Assistants also sometimes deal with the parents, and make it possible for us to accomplish all that we do as we treat our patients.

The Pediatric Dental Assistants Association helps ensure pediatric dental assistants are recognized as professionals, and that they see their work as a career, not a job. Pediatric dental assistants are dedicated professionals who work hard to ensure kids have the best possible outcomes at every single dental appointment, and that the kids care about their oral health and overall health long into adulthood.

Pediatric dentists can give their pediatric dental assistants a membership in the PDAA as a pat on the back for a job well-done, and to show them that they are recognized and appreciated for all they do. Membership in the PDAA gives assistants the opportunity to meet with like-minded people and share similar experiences and challenges. It helps provide a better sense of community in

knowing that their office is not the exception — that the issues they face are universal in the field.

Most of all, I want the PDAA to be a resource. I want assistants to truly excel in their chosen professional career and have the necessary skills and tools available. Members enjoy educational modules on a wide range of topics, and we are always willing to create more to answer questions and provide additional skills.

For more information on the array of benefits the PDAA offers our pediatric dental assistant members, check out [PediatricDentalAssistantsAssociation.org](http://PediatricDentalAssistantsAssociation.org). Now is the time to renew your membership in the association, so keep your eyes peeled for renewal notices! Please tell your colleagues about the PDAA so they can have their assistants join, too.

It's hard to believe it, but we are nearing the end of 2016. I hope you have a wonderful holiday season and that you are able to enjoy some quality time with your family and friends. It's always a joyful time of year and a time to cherish your loved ones. Happy holidays to you and yours from the Pediatric Dental Assistants Association!

Cheers,

Rhea M. Haugseth, D.M.D





# THE FOMO EFFECT

## Stop Feeling Like You're Missing Out on Everything

**D** O YOU SUFFER FROM "FEAR OF MISSING OUT"? The very real, increasingly worrisome syndrome has been adorably coined FOMO, a word officially added to the Oxford English Dictionary in 2013. We might joke about the fear of missing out, or of not being able to say no to social events or potential picturesque weekend photo opportunities, but psychologists are beginning to worry. Could FOMO be more serious than simply believing in the old turn of phrase, "the grass is always greener"?

Too much FOMO can be paralyzing, as you get stuck in the routine of checking your phone for updates about your ex's new career move or feeling depressed that you weren't invited to a wedding. Even worse, we get so caught up in cultivating the perfect image of our own lives to show off online that we forget to savor the good moments as they happen.

Here's what you need to do to make sure FOMO doesn't take over and leave you — or your child — anxious, depressed, and unsatisfied.

**Unplug.** You know for a fact that the lives you watch on social media aren't as interesting and perfect as they look. If spending time online is making you

feel bad, limit your daily dose of social media or take a social media vacation. Facebook allows users to temporarily deactivate their accounts, so you can always give yourself a week or monthlong break to decompress and re-center.

**Consider alternate realities.** According to the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, thinking about what your life would be like without the things and people you have in it right now makes you more appreciative. Studies show that this appreciation improves positive feelings in general.

**Commit to your decisions.** UCLA neuroscience researcher Alex Korb says it's important to make decisions. Stop trying to keep your options open. The act of finally making a decision relieves a ton of stress and is one less thing to add to your feelings of uncertainty about your situation.

**Slow down and be grateful.** Being more mindful as you go about your day-to-day will help you slow down and appreciate the moment. Savor the sensory pleasures of your day and remember to be thankful for the little things. Taking time to consider what you have is a surefire way to dampen the effects of impending FOMO.

# Supplement Nation

## How Too Many Vitamins Are Hurting Us

Are you taking too many vitamins? Supplements, as well as fortified beverages and foods, are more popular than ever. Ads tell us how important vitamins are for better health. It can be confusing to know what we should really take. Are we doing more harm than good?

Vitamins are already in most of what we eat. Through digestion, our bodies extract the vitamins we need to stay healthy. When we inundate our bodies with extra vitamins, it can lead to hypervitaminosis, aka vitamin toxicity.

Hypervitaminosis is a rare condition that occurs after consuming too much of a vitamin. It can start with nausea before turning into something more serious. It's often the result of taking too much of a vitamin supplement.

There are two types of vitamins: fat soluble and water soluble. Fat-soluble vitamins break down in fat tissue before being used by cells in the body. These stay in the body for a long time. Water-soluble vitamins are easily broken down by water and absorbed. Excess water-soluble vitamins are quickly flushed out of the body through urine.

Most hypervitaminosis cases are caused by fat-soluble vitamins, typically vitamins A and D. Early symptoms of vitamin toxicity include difficulty concentrating, trouble sleeping, or tingling and numbness in the extremities.

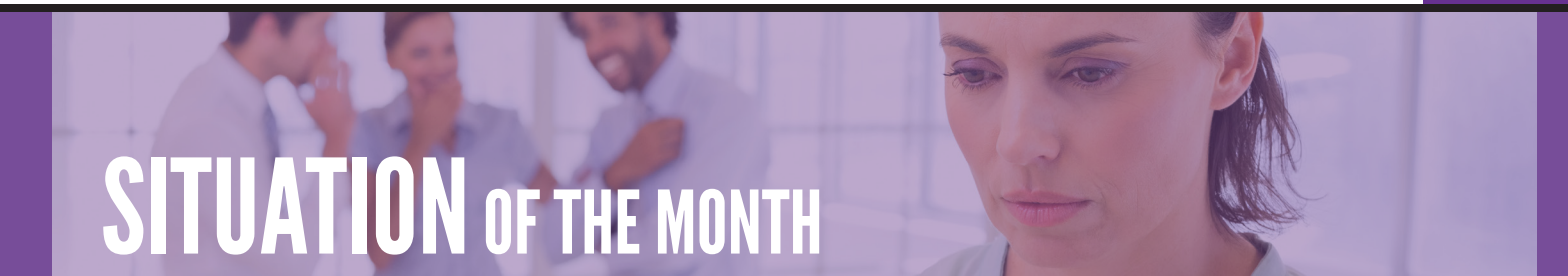
### SEVERE SYMPTOMS OF VITAMIN A TOXICITY INCLUDE ...

- Blurred vision
- Bone pain/swelling
- Hair loss
- Hypercalcemia (elevated calcium in the blood)
- Liver damage
- Skin conditions (discoloration, itching, peeling, rash, oiliness)

### SEVERE SYMPTOMS OF VITAMIN D TOXICITY INCLUDE ...

- Dehydration
- Fatigue
- Hypercalcemia
- Loss of appetite
- Weakness

For many of us, a healthy breakfast, lunch, and dinner will give our body the vitamins it needs. If you feel you need to take a daily multivitamin or supplement, be sure to talk with your doctor. Your doctor can tell you if you need a supplement and can help you find the best one for your specific dietary needs.



# SITUATION OF THE MONTH

## DEAR PEDIATRIC PRO,

I consider myself a social person. I don't usually have trouble striking up a conversation with anyone at the practice, and my co-workers are happy to engage in conversation. But lately, I've noticed whenever I pass by talking co-workers, they suddenly get quiet or stop talking altogether. Maybe I'm being crazy, but I can't help but think they were talking about me. I'm left to wonder if I have done something wrong. How can I address the silence without being confrontational — or is this just a coincidence?

— Emily F., NV

## DEAR EMILY,

If I've seen it once I've seen it a hundred times before. What you're describing sounds like a typical drama triangle. Yes, the dreaded D-word that can make a model dental office feel a lot like a high school. And that doesn't make for a fun or professional work environment, particularly if you're the one on the outside of all that hushed chatter. So of course your first thought was that they're talking about you. It's a natural

reaction. But if one of your co-workers is talking about you (and likely others too), then they're instigating drama to a third party. Essentially, the instigator is trying to bring a third person into the drama between them and others. The instigator wants people on his or her side. This then creates the "Drama Triangle."

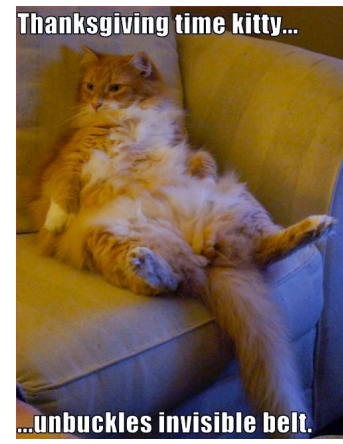
Your first option is always to open a dialogue with the instigator in an attempt to resolve the conflict. As a mature employee, you should be able to go straight to the source and bring the drama to a satisfactory conclusion. Your second option is to seek help from an office manager or other office supervisor who can facilitate an open dialogue or resolve the conflict outright.

In situations like these, strive for the best outcome. We've often found the drama will stop at the third person, because he or she doesn't want to get involved. Sometimes, all it takes to stop the drama triangle is a third party who is willing to say, "I'm going to remove myself from the situation. I do not want to be a part of this talk." And, then walks away. This leaves the instigator with no one to talk to about you or anyone else.

Good luck, and thanks for your question!

— Pediatric Pro

# ENJOY A LAUGH ON US!



# APRICOT AND WILD RICE STUFFING

This Thanksgiving, whip up this homemade side dish, sure to impress even the most skeptical of in-laws!

## INGREDIENTS

- 10 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 (6-ounce) package wild rice
- 1 loaf sourdough bread, torn into pieces
- 1 onion, chopped
- 3 celery ribs, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 cup dried apricots, chopped
- ¼ cup parsley, chopped
- 2 tablespoons sage, chopped
- 1 tablespoon thyme, chopped
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper
- 1 cup roasted walnuts, chopped
- 2 cups chicken stock

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 375 F and grease a 3-quart baking dish.
2. Cook rice according to package instructions and toast the bread on a baking sheet until dry.
3. In a large saucepan over medium heat, melt butter, then add onion, celery, and garlic. Stir until softened (8–10 minutes). Add apricots, parsley, sage, and thyme. Cook 1–2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.
4. Stir in rice, bread, walnuts, and chicken stock. Transfer to baking dish and bake 35–40 minutes or until golden.

Recipe inspired by [countryliving.com](http://countryliving.com).

Enjoy!