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John Button



John Button is a fourth-year dental student at the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine in Philadelphia, PA. Originally from East Brookfield, MA, John graduated from Tufts University in 2022 with a Bachelor of Science in biochemistry and French. In May 2025, John became the inaugural graduate of the Master of Science in Oral and Population Health (MOPH) program through the Center for Integrative Global Oral Health at Penn Dental Medicine. His thesis, "Noma (Cancrum Oris) Risk Factors:

Feasibility of an Individual Patient Data Meta-Analysis and the Development of a Data Collection Tool for Noma Studies", explores the gaps in our understanding of the disease and proffers a standardized tool to study them. John's main research interests are epidemiology and surgical reconstruction for noma, a devastating oro-facial gangrene. In 2023, John partnered with South African epidemiologist Elise Farley and British microbiologist Stuart Ainsworth to found the International Noma Network, a consortium of noma and (oral) health researchers from around the globe. The Network now comprises over 300 members and hosts monthly webinars to promote noma awareness and foster collaboration. John is currently pursuing a career in oral and maxillofacial surgery, where he hopes to combine his epidemiology and research methods training with direct patient care to see an end to noma. Outside of academics, John enjoys cooking, running, and swimming, having run both an Olympic triathlon and the Philadelphia marathon.