

The New Dental Times

Produced for the patients of:
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and
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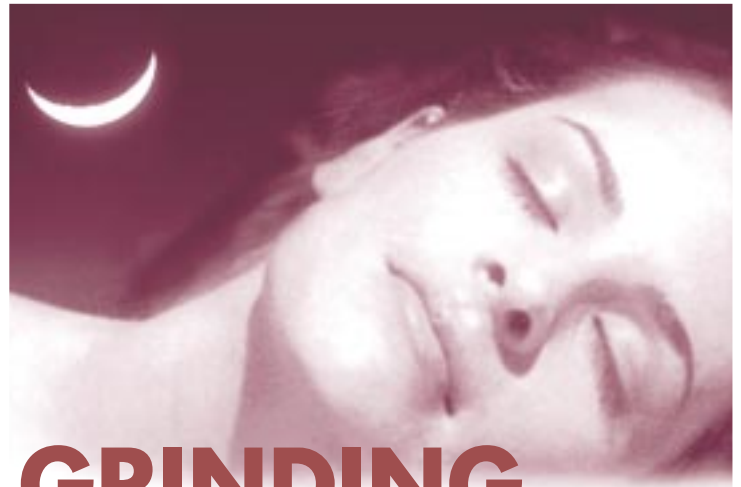
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We appreciate what you do!

All year long, our hope for our patients is that they will have health and happiness, and we know how important it is to express that. And beyond this hope, we'd like you to know how much we appreciate your choosing us for your dental health care and making us a part of your life.

Our staff is made up of employees who are dedicated to providing you with the best service. We want your experiences with us to always be warm and pleasant. Every time you choose our office for your dental care, you're telling us that you know you will be treated with care and concern. We want you to know how much we appreciate that vote of confidence.

During the holidays, our minds turn to the things we are most grateful for—health, family, good friends, and our patients. The fact that you've allowed us the privilege of providing your dental care, given us the opportunity to get to know you and your family, and that you tell your family and friends about us means a great deal. We hope you realize how much we appreciate those things. We hope to continue this relationship far into the future.



GRINDING THE NIGHT AWAY?

Are you waking up feeling like you were up chatting all night? Is your jaw sore? Are you keeping your spouse awake? It's possible that stress is causing you to grind your teeth while you sleep.

If you respond to daytime stress by clenching your jaw, chances are you may be doing it at night too. The danger of this habit is that it can loosen your teeth, cause gum recession, and wear down the biting surfaces.

Of course, the best way to relieve problems caused by stress is to deal with the stress and the difficulties that cause it. Until you can do that, you can help your teeth by making yourself aware of your mouth movements. Each time you clench your teeth, stop and try

opening your mouth just a small bit instead. At rest, it's normal for your teeth to be apart. You can test this by letting the tip of your tongue protrude slightly between your open jaws. Whenever you do this, you are helping to train your jaw muscles to relax. In addition, avoid caffeine-containing beverages that can increase muscle tension. You also need to avoid chewing on items such as pens, pencils, straws, or gum.

A painful jaw or cheeks or sore teeth upon waking can be signs of TMD or another problem, so don't ignore these symptoms. If it continues, call us about a diagnosis and treatment to relieve your pain and save your teeth.

We strive to provide the best in patient satisfaction.



How anti-depressants affect your smile

Anti-depressants can affect your smile in more ways than one. Some of them can cause dry mouth, because they affect your saliva production. The problem with this is that lack of saliva can lead to decay and gum disease.

If you're taking anti-depressants, here are some suggestions to help you avoid dry mouth and keep smiling.

■ **Pay special attention to your homecare.** Brush after every meal or at least twice a day, and don't skimp on flossing.

■ **Avoid sweets.** We don't mean the occasional cheesecake, we mean daily sodas and candies and items that contain hidden sugars, such as cough drops and antacids.

■ **Go for sugar-free sweets.** Chewing sugar-free gum can increase saliva production, as can sucking on sugarless sour candies.

■ **Drink lots of water.** It won't increase your saliva production, but it will help keep your mouth clean and feeling moist.

■ **See us regularly and tell us about your health.** Let us know about any medications you're taking, since some of them can affect your dental health. If we feel you need to come in more often than every six months, we'll be sure to discuss it with you.

DIABETICS—

Good homecare shouldn't hurt

Most diabetics are aware that they need to take especially good care of their teeth—scrupulous brushing and flossing and regular checkups. Sometimes, however, our diabetic patients complain that homecare (flossing, in particular) is painful.

Naturally, we don't want good dental care—at home or in our office—to cause discomfort. On the other hand, good homecare is essential to the diabetic. That's why we may recommend

topical anesthetics that can be purchased at your local pharmacy to help lessen any pain you might feel while brushing or flossing. An anesthetic or mouthwash containing benzocaine is generally a good choice. Ask your pharmacist for help in finding one that works well for you.

In some cases, a prescription is necessary to provide needed relief. When that happens, consult us to recommend something that may help.



YOUR CHILD'S BREATH

We don't tend to think of youngsters having "bad breath." In fact, we might think it's unusual and even wonder if it's a sign of something serious. Relax. Often, bad breath in a child is related to a minor problem in the mouth or nasal cavity.

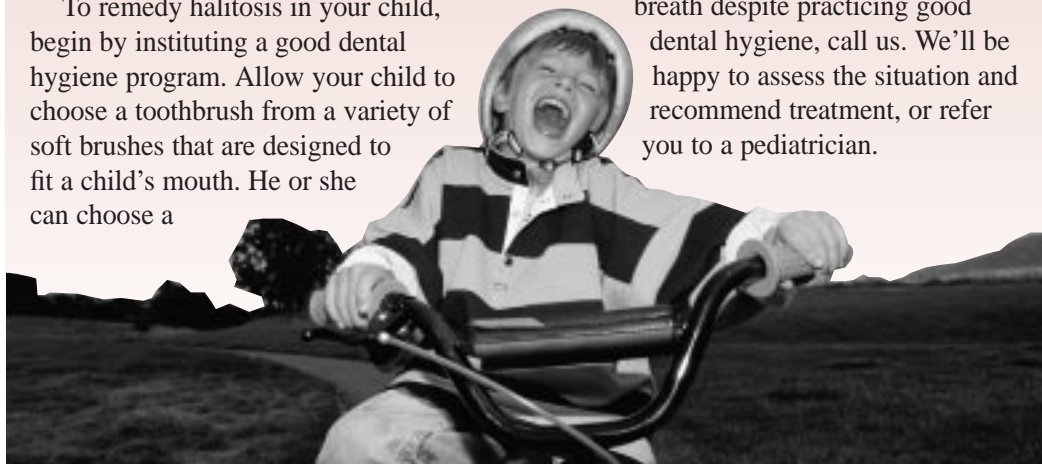
Foul-smelling breath is usually caused by bacteria that multiply in the mouth when dental hygiene is poor. If decay occurs, bad breath may be the first sign—even before the child experiences pain. Other causes of bad breath in your little ones include infections of the sinuses, tonsils, and throat, and chronic congestion caused by allergies.

To remedy halitosis in your child, begin by instituting a good dental hygiene program. Allow your child to choose a toothbrush from a variety of soft brushes that are designed to fit a child's mouth. He or she can choose a

toothpaste as well, providing that it contains the recommended amount of fluoride. Brushing with your child each morning and night allows you to supervise this activity and makes it something the two of you can do together.

As with any good habit, having your child flossing each day at an early age can help him or her keep gums and teeth healthy for a lifetime. Flossing not only improves gum health, it also removes food that gets caught between teeth and contributes to bad breath. Of course, regular checkups with us are an essential part of a good hygiene program.

If your child experiences continued bad breath despite practicing good dental hygiene, call us. We'll be happy to assess the situation and recommend treatment, or refer you to a pediatrician.





CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH

February is Children's Dental Health Month. From its humble beginnings as a one-day event in 1941, Children's Dental Health Month has grown into a nationwide celebration sponsored by the American Dental Association (ADA) and their local affiliates. In observance of this event, which seeks to establish healthy dental habits at an early age, we offer the following tips.

Fluoride is your biggest ally in the fight against tooth decay in children. Since fluoridated water and fluoride drops and tablets were introduced, cavities in children have been reduced by 50 percent.

Sealants are used to prevent cavity formation on the chewing surfaces. They seal the grooves in tooth surfaces to keep bacteria out and reduce decay.

Of course, regular dental checkups and good homecare are essential to good dental health. Brushing after each meal, flossing daily, and seeing us every six months teaches your child good dental care that will last a lifetime.

Let's talk

Most people who visit a dentist have one goal in mind—they want healthy teeth and gums. To help with that, we'd like to give you a suggestion about how you can help us provide the best dental care for your money. We call it communication.

When we communicate, something wonderful happens—we learn about each other. What and how much we learn depends upon how well we communicate, but here are some examples of things we might learn from each other by taking the time to talk a little during your next visit.

■ **We can learn about your dental and medical history.**

The things we learn can help us provide care that's more customized to your needs.

■ **You can learn about the dental options available.** For instance, if you've lost a tooth, we could replace it with a bridge, an implant, or a removable denture. Only by discussing these options together can we discover which treatment would be best for you.

■ **We can learn which options work best for you** when you tell us about your lifestyle, diet, and dental hygiene habits.

■ **You can learn about costs** with relation to different treatments and whether we accept your dental insurance.

Never be afraid to ask questions. We want to know what you want in your dental treatment so that we can provide care that satisfies your needs. We can both reach our goals when we work together and communicate.



SENIORS—EAT YOUR VEGETABLES!

Research continues to show that fruits and vegetables are an essential part of a balanced diet. Even more interesting, they may help to ward off health problems such as cancer, circulatory diseases, and obesity problems. Unfortunately, many older Americans don't eat the fruits and vegetables they need because of lost teeth, gum disease, or dentures that don't fit properly and interfere with eating.

These problems can be remedied, however, by cooking fruits and vegetables in ways that will allow them to be eaten more easily. Boiling and steaming

vegetables and puréeing fruits can help seniors receive the nutrients they need from foods that might otherwise be difficult to eat. Here are some suggestions to make vegetables and fruits more palatable for those with dental difficulties.

■ *Drink your fruits by mixing them in a blender. Try bananas, strawberries, and orange juice mixed with some vanilla yogurt. You can drink your vegetables as well when you enjoy tomato and other vegetable juices.*

■ *Shred your veggies. Shredded, chopped, or diced carrots and zucchini can be*

added to tomato sauce or to an omelet. Shredded apple can become part of a homemade bread.

■ *Purée your fruit and put it on top of pancakes.*

■ *Stuff your potatoes with other vegetables (e.g., spinach).*

■ *Soups and casseroles are other excellent ways to make vegetables tastier and easier to chew.*

With a little creative cooking, you should be able to avoid chewing problems and enjoy a variety of fruits and vegetables without compromising your diet.

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Here's your dental newsletter!

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Is there someone close to you who would love to have whiter teeth? Does your child, spouse, or parent have stains that keep him or her from smiling broadly?

Teeth are naturally a beautiful ivory color, but they can be stained by beverages, tobacco use, and some medications. If a brighter smile is the fondest wish of someone close to you, why not make that dream come true?

There are many whitening options available. We can help decide which one is best for your loved one, and you can give a gift that will keep him or her smiling for years to come. Call our office now to discuss how you can give the gift of whiter teeth this holiday season.

Vaccine called "promising"

A California-based company is hard at work on developing a vaccine against dental decay, and they hope to have it available within the next year or two. The ADA has reviewed the company's initial research and called it "promising."

Testing on the vaccine was performed on volunteers in London, England. Volunteers were treated with a rinse to kill decay-causing bacteria in their mouths. Then two groups were treated. In the first group, the teeth were painted with a placebo. In the second group, the colorless, tasteless vaccine was applied. The goal of the vaccine is to keep bacteria from adhering to teeth.

Two months later, the first group had significant numbers of bacteria in their mouths again, but the group that received the vaccine was still being protected from decay-causing bacteria.



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