

Dental Health News®

News from the office of...



Dr. Marc Dyer

Greetings to all our patients!

Now that summer is officially behind us and the fall schedule is in full swing, we'd like to ensure that you and your family are up-to-date on your dental checkups.

Remember that dental health is a lifelong commitment, and as you can see from the article on page 2, is one that includes not only good daily dental hygiene and regular visits to the dentist, but also healthy eating habits.

Remember, with the holidays — and all the accompanying photo opportunities — just around the corner, you might consider planning for tooth whitening or other cosmetic improvements now.

Enjoy your newsletter, and we look forward to seeing you again soon!

All the best,

Marc Dyer

Dr. Marc Dyer

A BEAUTIFULLY COMPLETE SMILE

Just as you wouldn't iron only the front of your shirt, or polish just the front of your shoes, it doesn't make sense to beautify your front teeth while ignoring your back teeth's appearance.



We think that a perfect smile should go beyond your front teeth, all the way to the back of your mouth, allowing you to smile broadly and laugh out loud without worrying about any unsightly metal fillings or crowns. If you agree, then ask us to explain how easy it is to have your existing metal replaced with porcelain inlays and onlays — natural looking alternatives that are both strong and attractive.

An inlay is similar to a filling in that it lies inside the cusp tips of a tooth. (A cusp is the pointed or rounded projection on the chewing portion of a tooth.) An onlay is like a crown; it is a bigger filling that covers one or more cusps of a tooth.

Almost any metal filling can be replaced with a beautiful porcelain inlay or onlay. Not only are porcelain replacements attractive, they can actually increase the strength of a tooth substantially over a metal filling.

The reason for this is that inlays and onlays are bonded directly onto the tooth with special resins, gluing the tooth to the filling and helping the restoration to stay in place for many years.

There are many advantages to the strong, natural-looking composite materials used in inlays and onlays. In fact, not only are these "white fillings" aesthetically pleasing, they also offer the convenience of almost instant curing (hardening), allowing your tooth to be fully functional as soon as you leave our office.

As well, inlays and onlays are excellent cosmetic alternatives to gold or other metal restorations because they allow practical solutions to your need for fillings or to fix damaged teeth, while providing an attractive visual enhancement over the old metal fillings.

Call us today to ask about more ways to perfect your *whole* smile!

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YOUR RECIPE FOR DENTAL HEALTH

We all know that a well-balanced diet is an important element in the development of healthy teeth and bones. We recognize the importance of ensuring that our children get the recommended daily number of servings of milk, cheese and other good calcium sources, but let's not forget that balancing our own, grown-up nutritional intake is an ongoing requirement, as well.



You may be surprised to learn that teeth are “alive,” and that in order to keep them healthy you need to maintain a well-balanced diet that includes potassium, phosphorous, vitamin D and calcium. The best dietary sources for vitamin D and calcium are dairy products, such as milk, yogurt and cheese, while potassium and phosphorous can be found naturally in fruits and vegetables.

Teeth, like bones, are calcified tissues. Teeth begin to form in the first few months of fetal life and the mineralization process continues into late adolescence. An adequate intake of calcium is essential for proper development of tooth structures and, as such, it is recommended that children up to age 11 consume 700 to 900 mg of calcium per day, while pre-teens and teenagers require between 1,000 to 1,200 mg of calcium or more per day to keep up with the growth spurts common to this age group. (As a guideline, there are about 300 mg of calcium in one cup of milk.)

Calcium consumption is important at all stages of life. When adults don't get enough calcium in their diet, their body is forced to borrow what it needs from their bones. Continued withdrawals of calcium from the “bone bank” can lead to osteoporosis, or brittle bones. In fact, dentists are often the first ones to notice the initial indications of osteoporosis, because, as the jawbone is surrendering calcium for needs elsewhere in the body, the bone will weaken and teeth will loosen, creating gaps where bacteria can invade.

According to the Academy of General Dentistry, teeth may soften when there is a shortage of vitamin D, making them more susceptible to decay and periodontal disease. Because vitamin D is produced in the body

with sun exposure, a deficiency in this vitamin is not common, however it can develop in some who don't consume enough milk or fish.

Even if your teeth are healthy, they won't do much good if they are held in place by deteriorating bone and gums. That's why it's important to ensure that your diet includes not only enough calcium and vitamin D, but also enough vitamin B and C, to help keep gum disease away.

If you're a vegetarian or vegan, you should be especially watchful of your diet to ensure you don't experience any deficiencies in calcium, vitamin D, riboflavin, vitamin B12 or complete proteins. Even vegans who don't get their calcium from milk, yogurt and cheese can get what they need from fortified food products, such as certain breakfast cereals, fortified orange juice, soy products, almonds and some dark green vegetables, like broccoli.

Ask us about healthy food options that will improve not only your dental health, but your general health, as well.



“JUST” A TOOTHACHE, OR SOMETHING MORE?



There are times when a toothache isn't just a toothache. In fact, ignoring toothache pain can sometimes even have life-threatening implications.

A toothache can present itself in a number of different ways. You may feel sensitivity to cold or heat, or pain when you bite down, or even a radiating type of ache after eating something very sweet. The pain may come and go over a long period of time, or may appear suddenly, and severely.

While many toothaches are a result of dental decay or a crack in a tooth, you may also feel the same type of pain from sinusitis — inflamed sinuses due to a bacterial infection — or sinus congestion from a cold, flu or an allergy. Nerve pain can sometimes feel like a toothache, too.

The most serious type of toothache may be the result of a dental abscess, from an infected nerve in a tooth.

It can intensify into an infection of the mouth, face, jaw or throat as bacteria extend from a cavity into the surrounding tissues.

In addition to a feeling of pressure, and an intense, persistent throbbing, the tooth may be sensitive to heat, and chewing or biting. As the infection worsens, you may develop a fever, a swelling in your face or cheek, and tender, swollen lymph nodes under your jaw or in your neck. An abscessed tooth is the most dangerous of toothaches — if not treated, the infection can spread into your bloodstream, leading to severe complications.

Don't wait for toothache pain to just “go away.” Please call us for advice about any type of dental discomfort.

LIKE TO TOOT YOUR OWN HORN? LET US KNOW!

Sometimes a chair-side chat about your hobbies can spur a very important discussion about your hobbies' impact on your dental treatments. That you play a wind instrument is a fine example of something to share with your dentist.



A critical component of a musician's technique is “embouchure,” defined as “the way in which a player applies his or her mouth to the mouthpiece of a brass or wind instrument.” More precisely, embouchure involves the synchronization of the lips, tongue, mouth and facial muscles in the production of a brass or wind instrument's tone and range. Any variation in a person's embouchure can affect the outcome of their music, which is why it's so important to inform your dentist if you're a musician, before certain dental procedures are initiated. For example, the application of bonding or dental veneers on the front teeth can significantly change the way a musician moves his or her mouth when playing an instrument. In fact, changing your front teeth can even affect how you speak, until you get used to the change.

If you're a student or someone who shares a woodwind or brass instrument with others, it's important to recognize that shared instruments often are not properly sanitized after use, and run the risk of being heavily contaminated with a variety of bacteria and fungi — even weeks after use.

Ask us about the “mouth-body” connection when it comes to illnesses, and in the meantime, please sanitize any shared instruments properly before putting them in your mouth.

WHY COSMETIC DENTISTRY?



According to a 2011 cosmetic dentist survey, the following are the most common reasons that people decide to improve their smile with cosmetic dentistry:

1. Improved appearance.
2. Self-esteem.
3. Professional success.
4. Health.
5. Improved relationships.

While certain cosmetic procedures, like tooth whitening, can only be done on healthy teeth, there are other procedures that are performed in order to strengthen and improve teeth, and, in the process, they improve the overall appearance of your smile.

For example, dentists agree that chipped teeth are a common reason patients ask for a cosmetic update. Chipped or otherwise damaged

teeth can easily be covered with porcelain veneers, mended with dental bonding or covered with crowns or onlays. Your teeth will not only be stronger after most of these procedures, they'll also look great!

In addition to chipped teeth, we regularly perform cosmetic improvements to fix discolored, uneven, and missing teeth, or gaps in-between teeth. Inevitably, the result is a younger, brighter smile, with the confidence boost that comes from an improved appearance.

Wondering if your smile could use a boost? Please ask us to explain all your options!

TEMPERING TEEN ANGST WITH A SMILE

The teenage years can be filled with angst and self-doubt. But parents can help their teen get through these tumultuous years by learning about options that allow their child to feel more confident about himself or herself.

An attractive smile goes far in today's world, which is why orthodontics and tooth whitening are the top cosmetic dental procedures for today's teens. Tooth whitening is simple, fast and instantly gratifying, while orthodontics have come a long way in both appearance and comfort. If you recall "heavy metal railroad tracks" when thinking of orthodontics, you'll be pleased to hear there are now "invisible" orthodontics offered to both teens and adults.

Dental education is also paramount in this age group, as teens need to recognize that whatever they put in their mouths — from sugary snacks to staining foods to tobacco — will affect the color and the quality of their smiles.

Let's work together to put a smile on your teenager's face!

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Our Services Include:

- General Dentistry
- Cosmetic Dentistry
- Tooth Whitening
- Denture Fittings
- Dental Implants
- Bonding & Veneers
- Crowns & Bridges
- Emergency Dental Care

