

# Painless Dental Bytes

*Compliments of Edward J. Zuckerberg, D.D.S., F.A.G.D.*

## News From the Office of:



### Dr. Edward J. Zuckerberg

It's spring, which means it's time for spring cleaning – starting with your smile!

Remember that in addition to a professional teeth cleaning, dental visits include:

- A review of your medical history, and any possible effects on your dental health.
- An oral cancer examination.
- An examination of your teeth and gums.
- A check of your biting, chewing and grinding patterns.
- Stain removal, removal of plaque and tartar, and teeth polishing.
- Discussions on any concerns or questions you may have on general oral care or possible cosmetic enhancements.

Welcome the brighter weather with a radiant, healthy smile. If you don't already have your next dental visit scheduled, please call today.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

*Edward J. Zuckerberg*

Dr. Edward J. Zuckerberg

## YOUR ONE-STOP SMILE SHOP

**A beautiful smile is an ice-melter, a door opener, an invitation for a special relationship, or even a new job! Let us help you achieve your dream smile!**



A winning smile begins with healthy dental habits. That means brushing properly and for a minimum of two minutes, at least twice a day, and flossing at least once a day. Mastering the proper brushing and flossing technique is your first line of defense against the bacterial plaque that causes tooth decay and gum disease.

Of course, even healthy teeth can be crooked or turned, chipped, uneven or discolored.

According to a survey conducted by the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry and completed by cosmetic dentists, the following are the most common problems mentioned by patients seeking cosmetic dental improvements:

- Chipped teeth
- Discolored teeth
- Uneven teeth
- Missing teeth
- Gaps between teeth

Believe it or not, these smile-stoppers often have

simple solutions – many of which are faster and easier than you could ever imagine!

For example, a patient may worry that his or her teeth are too short, or that the teeth look uneven or are of different lengths. A quick dental consultation may reveal that the teeth are actually fine, and that a simple, in-office gum procedure could uncover a perfect smile by evening out the gums.

In the case of a missing tooth or teeth, the difference between a full smile and one that is missing one or more teeth is visually significant. People may form an opinion of the person, and judge his or her social and economic status based solely on their initial impression.

The competition is tough out there – give yourself every advantage by making sure you have a healthy, confident smile that can open the right doors.

We'd love to make you smile. Please call today to find out how!



# TOOTH TIPS!

Below are a few frequently asked dental-related queries. Are you wondering about a dental issue not covered below? Please call us with your questions – we'd be happy to answer them for you!

**Q: I'm missing a tooth. It's in the back though, so nobody can see it. That's not a big deal, right?**

**A:** Each tooth in your mouth is there for a purpose. It's important to replace any missing tooth – even if it's in the back – because the gap due to a missing tooth allows surrounding teeth to drift out of position, shift, or tip into the empty space and change your bite. This could lead to jaw pain, cavities, gum disease and additional tooth loss.

Please talk to us about replacements for any missing teeth. Early intervention will help you avoid more extensive – and expensive! – dentistry in the future.

**Q: As I get older, I find I'm getting "long in the tooth". What other dental issues can I expect as I age?**

**A:** First of all, while the old adage leads us to believe that our teeth get longer as we age, the illusion is actually the result of receding gums, which are commonly caused either by overbrushing, or by gum disease.

One of the first warning signs of gum disease is swollen or bleeding gums. If you notice any changes in your gums, please be sure to call us for an appointment. We will assess the condition of your teeth and gums and work with you to halt and prevent any damage.

Another change you may notice as you age is that your teeth – either because of naturally-thinning enamel as the years go on, or as a reaction to years of exposure to coffee, tea, colas and staining foods – are not as white as they were when you were younger. Professional tooth whitening is one of the easiest, most effective ways to create a younger look – sometimes in just one dental visit!

**Q: I just found out I'm pregnant! I guess I should avoid the dental office until after the baby arrives, right?**

**A:** Congratulations! This is certainly the time to take extra-good care of yourself, and that includes keeping up with – NOT reducing – your dental visits.

Please make us aware of your situation before we start your appointment, in case we need to alter your treatment or X-ray schedule. Know that pregnant women have a risk of increased inflammation of the gums because of a surge in estrogen and progesterone, and as such, rigid attention to dental hygiene and regular cleanings at the dentist are a must in order to keep teeth and gums clean, and to prevent plaque from forming. If plaque isn't removed, it may lead to gingivitis and subsequently to more serious periodontal diseases, which have been linked to pre-term and low-weight babies.

As your dental professionals, we're here to help you and your family through each dental situation and life stage. Regular visits and open communication about any changes in your life will allow us to monitor your oral health and keep you smiling!





# TAKE A DEEP BREATH. NOW, HOW'S YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE?

There's a "silent killer" in our midst, and it's known as high blood pressure, or hypertension.

Hypertension is a growing concern in today's society. It's a sneaky disease, because in many cases, the patient is not aware of any problems, and doesn't notice any symptoms. High blood pressure should not, however, be taken lightly, as it can be a contributing factor to heart failure, strokes, kidney failure and blindness.

As your dental provider, we need to be aware of your current medical status and which medications you're on. Since blood pressure increases with anxiety, and dental appointments trigger anxiety in many people, we recommend the following:

1. Book an afternoon dental appointment. The increase in blood pressure in a hypertensive patient is associated with the hours immediately after waking up, usually peaking by midmorning. For this reason,

we suggest an afternoon appointment, when the fluctuation of blood pressure is less likely.

2. Consider using a sedative the night before a dental procedure to help counter any rise in blood pressure. Depending on when you take your sedative, you may need to get a ride to or from your appointment.
3. Avoid caffeine before your appointment.
4. Break a multiple-procedure appointment into several, shorter appointments if possible.

As much as we try to keep our dental environment friendly and relaxing, it's common to feel some anxiety about some dental treatments. Please let us know if you suffer from hypertension, and keep us aware of your overall health issues so that we can do our best to safely accommodate your dental needs.

## THE DOWNSIDE OF DAILY MEDICATIONS

**A large percentage of the population relies on at least one daily prescription or over-the-counter medication. While the benefits of the correct medications may outweigh any risks, it's important to recognize that, from a dental perspective, many of these drugs have side effects that interfere with the normal production of saliva.**



Saliva keeps your teeth bathed in a mineral-rich solution that helps wash away foods, sugars and acids, to keep your teeth more resistant to decay. While saliva makes it easier to talk, swallow, taste and digest food, a lack of saliva could lead to a condition known as dry mouth, identified in some cases by sores or split skin at the corners of the mouth, bad breath, difficulty speaking and swallowing, a burning or tingling sensation on the tongue, an altered sense of taste, and increased plaque, tooth decay and gum disease. In fact, dry mouth can lead to extensive tooth decay, mouth sores and oral infections, particularly among the elderly.

Which medications are most likely to cause oral dryness? According to the American Academy of

Periodontology, over 500 medications can contribute to oral dryness, including antihistamines (for allergies or asthma), antihypertensive medications (for blood pressure), decongestants, pain medications, diuretics and antidepressants.

Dry-mouth sufferers need to be aware that it's especially vital for them to come in for a dental examination and cleaning at least every six months. Please keep us aware of the medications you are on and how to work around their side effects.

## ENSURING – AND INSURING! – YOUR DENTAL HEALTH



**Dental health and overall well-being are indisputably linked, so it makes sense to ensure that your teeth, gums and general oral condition are professionally checked on a regular basis. If your employer provides dental insurance that will help cover the costs of your dental procedures, it pays to take advantage of those benefits.**

Dental insurance benefits vary depending on the plan you have, so make sure you understand what is and isn't covered. For example:

- Deductible. How much are you responsible to pay up-front, before your dental insurance kicks in?
- Co-payment. Will you and your insurance company share the costs of certain procedures?
- Limitations of your plan. For example, what is the waiting period before your plan becomes effective? What is the maximum yearly benefit?

- Exclusions. Which procedures are covered? Which ones are not? Are there specific exclusions for pre-existing conditions?

If your insurance plan doesn't cover a recommended procedure, it doesn't mean it's not important – it just means it falls outside of the plan your employer selected. In this case, you will want to discuss a separate payment plan, like one offered through our office.

Let's work on creating your million-dollar smile — within your budget!

## BEWARE OF THE BLING!

**If you, or someone you know, is considering a lip ring or tongue piercing, we suggest you learn the "hole" truth about oral piercing before taking the plunge.**

One of the most important differences between a piercing in the mouth, in comparison to other body parts, is that the mouth contains millions of bacteria, so the risk of infection is much higher.

Tongue jewelry can not only get in the way of talking and eating, but can also damage the teeth, sometimes leading to chips or fractures, and in some cases even the need for a tooth extraction or root canal. This type of jewelry can also contribute to gum recession, which can result in loose teeth and eventual tooth loss.

If you do decide to follow your passion for piercing, be sure to maintain a frequent schedule of dental visits so we can keep an eye on any jewelry-related oral issues so that they do not become big problems.

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**Dr. Zuckerberg & Team**



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#### **Our Services Include:**

- General Dentistry • Cosmetic Dentistry
- Emergency Dental Care • Invisalign® Braces
- Bad Breath Advice & Treatment
- Tooth Whitening (BriteSmile®)
- Denture Fittings • Dental Implants
- Bonding & Veneers • Crowns & Bridges

#### **Office Hours:**

Mon.: 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Tues., Wed.: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Thurs.: 1 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
Sat.: 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

#### **Office Team:**

Dr. David Donelson *Associate*  
Dr. Lance Gordon *Associate*  
Dr. Cliff Nebel *Associate*  
Vanessa *Front Desk Manager*  
Rosa *Office Manager*  
Kim, Michelle *Dental Assistants*  
Lori, Rosemarie, Ryan *Dental Hygienists*