



# DENTAL HEALTH LETTER

Produced for the  
patients of  
Catherine L.  
Forster, D.D.S.

Fall 2005

## OFFICE STAFF

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## OFFICE HOURS

Our regular hours are  
**7:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.**

**Appointment and  
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Phone:**  
**(330) 492-7889**  
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[www.cantonsmiles.com](http://www.cantonsmiles.com)



## IMPLANTS

*You won't know the difference*

Implant technology has improved so significantly that many people who undergo the implant procedure don't feel a difference between their implants and their real teeth. What they *do* notice is the remarkable difference between implants and dentures. What they *do* feel are the benefits of being able to:

- ▶ **Enjoy** foods that are crunchy, crispy, or dense without discomfort or fear of knocking their dentures loose.
- ▶ **Brush** their teeth in their mouths rather than soaking them in jars.
- ▶ **Smile** with confidence.
- ▶ **Laugh** without fear.
- ▶ **Speak** freely, with no danger of their dentures slipping.
- ▶ **Enjoy** healthy mouths, without gum irritation from dentures.

Modern implants can be used to replace just a few missing teeth or a whole set. The new teeth look natural and feel like your own. Not only do implants improve the look of your smile, they change your whole face for the better. People with implants don't have sunken cheeks, and their jaw line appears normal and solid. This procedure will enable you to have teeth that are straight, functional, and attractive. Although there is some discomfort with the surgery, most patients feel it's similar to having a tooth pulled. The procedure begins with the titanium implant being inserted into the jawbone. The gum tissue is pulled over the implant, and healing begins. During this part of the procedure, the bone and implant integrate in a process called "osseointegration." Once this is complete, a crown, bridge, or a bar (for a partial or full denture) can be attached to the implant for a smile that looks as natural as it feels.

If you've suffered long enough with a partial or full denture, maybe it's time to consider implants. Most of the people who have received implants find that they are still going strong with them 20 years later. Now *that's* a worthwhile investment. Talk to us about how implants could pay off for you, too.

**Our best patients are referred by our best patients. Thank you!**



## Making the milk go down

**M**ilk is good for youngsters. It helps build strong bones and teeth, and provides vitamins and protein. Unfortunately, some kids just don't like milk. This causes worry for a lot of moms, who know kids should drink it every day.

Fortunately, the essential nutrients in milk are found in some other foods as well. Often, mothers find that children who won't drink milk love yogurt laden with fruit. Cream soups, hard cheeses, and custards are other foods that can be substituted for milk. Certain vegetables, leafy green ones and broccoli, also contain calcium and are high in vitamins. Another idea that often works is to mix fruits, such as strawberries, in the milk with a scoop of ice milk. Many children who won't touch milk enjoy these homemade treats. And, no, it won't hurt to mix a little chocolate in the milk now and then. Just be sure that whenever your child drinks anything, brush or rinse with water afterward. Growing strong, healthy teeth is part of a parent's responsibility. We know that those of you who bring your children to us take that responsibility seriously. Ask us for more suggestions on how diet and nutrition can influence dental health.

*You probably won't feel a thing....*

**P**eriodontal (gum) disease can easily destroy the bond between your gums and teeth with very few noticeable symptoms. Although every case is different, there are many patients who are surprised to find they have periodontal disease because they weren't aware of the symptoms or didn't realize that the problems they were experiencing were signals of the disease. Symptoms of periodontal disease include:

- *bleeding from the gums during brushing*
- *redness or swelling of the gums*
- *a bad taste in the mouth*
- *bad breath*
- *gum recession*
- *changes in the way teeth fit together when you bite down*

Gum disease also can cause tenderness of the gums and deepening of the gingival pockets, which can lead to loose teeth.

Regular dental checkups as recommended by us can reveal problems that aren't obvious. That's another reason it's essential to have regular cleanings and dental-health examinations. Don't allow periodontal disease to ravage your mouth unchecked, and don't wait until you're in pain or feel your teeth loosening before visiting us. With regular visits, we can help you prevent periodontal disease and hopefully keep your teeth for life.



## !!EXTRA!!

### **Obesity** linked to periodontal disease

**S**tudies have uncovered a correlation between young adults whose weight classifies them as obese and the presence of periodontal disease. Adults in the studies ranged in age from 18 to 34. According to the research, young adults who are considered obese have a more than 75 percent higher chance of developing gum disease than their peers who are within the appropriate weight range.

The risk also seemed to increase in accordance with the size of the waistline. A waistline larger than 34 inches for a woman and 40 inches for a man actually indicated twice the risk for gum disease. The theory that poor diet may be a contributing factor in gum disease may be given more credence by this study.

The theory purports that a diet high in fresh fruits and vegetables is less likely to cause periodontal disease than a diet high in soft, sticky foods that are high in calories.

## Lost your smile? *Grow a new one!*

Okay, the technology isn't exactly available yet, but it may be on the way. The idea isn't so far-fetched anymore. Researchers in several places are working on genetically engineered cells that they hope will produce tooth tissue. Imagine being able to replace a lost tooth with one of your own, grown from your genetic material.

Researchers have isolated these cells with the hopes of discovering how the genetic material that controls tooth growth functions. Eventually, they hope to be able to duplicate that process to regrow missing teeth. So far, they have established tissue cultures to grow mouse teeth in laboratory dishes. Success in this area could revolutionize dentistry.

Imagine breaking or losing a tooth and being able to grow a new one to replace it. Would it make caring for your own teeth obsolete? We very much doubt it. We don't foresee good home care and regular dental checkups going out of style even if new teeth can be grown. We still recommend taking great care of the teeth you have so you don't have to replace that smile anytime soon.



## Your cup of tea?

Of all the drinks you could choose, tea may not be so bad. Now before you run out and stock up on canned or bottled tea, we're talking about the kind you brew yourself, and it should be prepared with minimal sugar. The good news is that brewing your own tea—either black or green—and drinking a few cups a day may be good for your teeth. When you go easy on the sugar and practice good oral hygiene, you can reap the benefits.

Here's what a few studies found:

- Tea was shown to kill bacteria that cause bad breath. It's believed that the natural antioxidants in tea were responsible.
- People who rinsed with tea had significantly fewer bacteria on their teeth than those who did not.

**Catherine L. Forster, D.D.S.**

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## The super in sealants

**S**ealants are a fine plastic resin that fits the chewing surfaces of molars by bonding into the pits and fissures. The resin then forms a barrier between the enamel and the bacteria that cause decay. Although children are the most likely recipients of sealants, they are sometimes applied to adult teeth, too.

The technology behind sealants allows them to be applied quickly and easily right in our office. A tooth that is to be sealed is first cleaned and prepared for the application by using an etching solution that will enable the sealant to stick to the tooth. The dentist then adheres the sealant on the prepared surface. A curing light may be used to help the sealant harden into place.

Although they are made of a plastic resin, sealants are strong and generally remain intact for years, even under the pressures of chewing. Sometimes “touch ups” are needed. During regular checkups, we’ll watch for problems that may indicate that the sealant should be reapplied.

Sealants are super for kids because they aid in preventing decay. However, sealants are only a part of the equation that adds up to a healthy smile. Brushing after each meal, daily flossing, and regular professional cleanings and checkups are the other essential contributors. A balanced diet that is low in sugar and high in nutrition helps, too. Starting a child off with good dental hygiene, healthy eating habits, and sealants could mean that they never need a filling their whole adult life.

## Use it before you lose it

**T**his might be called a “Dental Insurance Alert.” About 90 percent of all dental insurance is based upon a calendar year (January to December). If you do not utilize your dental benefits within the calendar year, those benefits are gone forever as of December 31.

The potential loss of benefits can be anywhere from \$750 to \$2,500, depending on your type of insurance. And these benefits were paid for by you either directly or through salary deductions.

If you are in need of dental care, be aware that 2005 is rapidly coming to an end. You should utilize your 2005 benefits before you lose them. Should you need extensive treatment, this is the last opportunity we will have to combine your 2005 and 2006 benefits to maximize your total return.

Dental insurance is your benefit. You have earned it...so why lose it? Please feel free to call our office for additional information.