



DENTAL HEALTH LETTER

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

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ONE AMERICAN DIES EVERY HOUR FROM ORAL CANCER

introducing *ViziLite® Plus*

Our practice continually looks for advances to ensure that we are providing the optimum level of oral health care to our patients. We are concerned about oral cancer and screen for it in every patient.

Detected early, oral cancer is 90 percent curable, and patients can live healthy lives. Yet a majority of lesions are not identified early with an unaided visual examination. Late detection of oral cancer is the primary reason that both the incidence and mortality rates of oral cancer continue to increase. As with most cancers, age is the primary risk factor for oral cancer. Tobacco and alcohol use are other major predisposing risk factors, but **more than 25 percent of oral-cancer victims have no such lifestyle risk factors.**



Oral-cancer risk profile

- Increased risk:** patients ages 18–39, sexually active patients (HPV 16/18)
- High risk:** patients age 40 and older, tobacco users (any age, any type within 10 years)
- Highest risk:** patients age 40 and older with lifestyle risk factors (tobacco and/or alcohol use), previous history of oral cancer

We have recently incorporated *ViziLite® Plus* to our standard of care

ViziLite® Plus is a simple rinse for the mouth. A chemiluminescent light is then used to reveal any abnormal tissue even before it is visible to the naked eye.

We find that using ViziLite Plus along with a standard oral-cancer examination improves the ability to identify suspicious areas at their earliest stages. ViziLite Plus is similar to proven early-detection procedures for other cancers, such as mammography, Pap smear, and PSA. ViziLite Plus is a simple and painless examination that gives the best chance to find oral abnormalities at the earliest possible stage.

Early detection of precancerous tissue can minimize or eliminate the potentially disfiguring effects of oral cancer and possibly save a life. The ViziLite Plus exam should be performed annually.

Open enrollment time is approaching!

Depending on where you work, it may even have arrived. Open enrollment time is the period of time toward year-end when you can choose your benefits for next year. During this time, consider what your dental needs for the following year will be. Do you have a child who will be needing braces? Have we been recommending a crown for one of your teeth? Think about the dental needs your family will have, and wisely choose your dental benefits for the upcoming year.



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

C'mon, give us a smile!

It only takes a moment to leave a lasting impression, so why not make one with a smile? Smiles benefit both the giver and the receiver in a variety of ways.

For the giver, a smile comes equipped with a release of emotions. Smiling means the focus is on something pleasurable, and negative emotions are swept away. When smiling, stress is reduced and social relationships improve. Receiving a smile comes with unspoken benefits of its own. The recipient of a smile experiences feelings of welcome and relaxation; it may be just the boost they needed during the course of a challenging day.

Moreover, a smile offers clues about the giver. Someone who smiles readily is seen as inviting and confident. He or she radiates a beauty that eclipses the mere physical. A majority of people believe that those who smile easily have higher self-esteem and more friendships. Not surprisingly, more than half of all adults believe that a more attractive smile would improve their level of self-confidence.

Our dental practice can help give you a smile you'll be comfortable flashing. To learn more about smile improvement and what it can do for you, call us today!



How to smile...

Smiling comes naturally to children, but it's a talent we lose as we age. By adulthood, about 80 percent of women will smile for a photo; less than 60 percent of men will show their pearly whites to the camera. A good smile should come naturally, but a little practice in front of the mirror can't hurt.

In addition to smiling, be sure to make eye contact with the recipient of the smile and tilt your head slightly to one side in a questioning pose. This is a smile that says, "Welcome...I'd like to talk to you." It also radiates a confidence and inner beauty that's yours alone. Don't be afraid to show that side of you. Go ahead and smile!

The pain of pizza palate

Almost all of us have experienced "pizza palate" at one time or another. However, you may not have realized that this painful ailment had a name. Pizza palate is the burn that results on the roof of your mouth when you're too quick to take a bite of that hot-from-the-oven pizza.

Here's how it happens: The pizza is served on your plate. It's piping hot and covered with melted cheese. Starving for a taste, you grab that first piece and take a ravenous bite. Immediately, the searing heat of the mozzarella and hot oil comes in contact with the roof of your mouth, causing the burn known as pizza palate. Symptoms of this ailment include pain, blistering, and redness that can last five days or more.

Severe cases of pizza palate can make eating and drinking uncomfortable for a few days. While your mouth is healing, stick to soft foods and cool liquids. Stay away from hard pretzels and other rough foods that can irritate the affected tissues. Rinse with warm saltwater after meals to aid healing. Topical treatments are sometimes recommended to alleviate the pain. If a case of pizza palate doesn't resolve itself in a week or so, call for professional help.



Energy drinks— more bad news for teeth!

Energy drinks aren't just the latest craze...they're big business. Over \$3 billion in sales were recorded in the last year or so, and that number is rising. Unfortunately, what's good for the makers of these overcaffeinated beverages is not good for teeth.

There are several problems with energy drinks and dental health:

- 1. Acidic content**—Acids often dominate the list of ingredients of energy drinks. These acids can literally erode away enamel—the first layer of protection teeth have from decay.
- 2. Sugar content**—Sugar content approaching 30 grams per serving makes these drinks equivalent to sodas. So while you're drinking, you're actually bathing your teeth in sugar and loading up on calories.
- 3. The buzz factor**—Loaded with caffeine, energy drinks provide a buzz that keeps those who ingest them pumped. Of course, that's the point. The problem, however, is that caffeine—like any other addictive substance—will keep you coming back for more. Many who imbibe these drinks report that they have three or more per day, and the more you drink, the worse for your teeth.

In addition to these problems, there are other health issues of concern, including obesity and the fact that these drinks provide no nutritional value. As is often the case, moderation is key. Once in a while, an energy drink is fine, but don't make them a habit. Enjoying one only every now and then is something your teeth, your waistline, and your overall health will thank you for.



**Don't brush
RIGHT AFTER
drinking an
energy drink,
but do rinse!**

That may sound like strange advice coming from a dentist, but the way the acid in these drinks acts on enamel makes it a smarter choice to rinse with plain water and then wait a bit before brushing.

FEELING PARCHED?

Dry mouth can turn your tongue into a desert!

Feeling a little dry in the mouth? If you find yourself reaching for the ice water more often, you could be suffering from dry mouth. Dry mouth, or xerostomia, is common among older adults. It's caused by a reduction in saliva flow, which is sometimes a side effect of certain medications.

COMMON MEDICATIONS

Dry mouth can be caused by both prescription medications and over-the-counter drugs. More than 400 medications include xerostomia as a side effect. One of the most common among these is ibuprofen, which is used to relieve headache pain and pain associated with inflammation. Prescription drugs—particularly antidepressants—can cause dry mouth as well. Celebrex—prescribed for arthritis pain—can cause dry mouth and other dental problems. Other causes of dry mouth include illnesses such as diabetes and Sjögren's syndrome, and radiation treatments for certain cancers. Some women experience this problem in relation to hormone depletion during and after menopause.

UNCOMMON DENTAL PROBLEMS

Reduced salivary flow can lead to a number of dental problems. In addition to the discomfort associated with dry mouth—sore throat, hoarseness, difficulty swallowing—gum disease and tooth decay can result. When there's less saliva to wash away debris, teeth are left unprotected. Infections, including oral yeast infections, can also occur. Those who wear dentures may notice they're less comfortable with them, and a lack of moisture in the mouth can lead to bad breath.

FINDING THE OASIS

Relieving dry mouth can often be achieved by combining approaches to the problem. Although carbonated beverages are popular, they aren't the best way to quench dry mouth. Neither are drinks that contain alcohol or caffeine. Plain water sipped regularly throughout the day usually helps. Chewing sugar-free gum or sucking on sugar-free candies can stimulate salivary glands to maintain moisture. Artificial saliva is sometimes recommended as well.

Professional dental care on a regular basis is essential to avoiding the problems that can be caused by dry mouth. Daily brushing and flossing can help reduce the likelihood of these, but periodic checkups can often catch problems early, when treatment can reverse the effects. Be sure to keep a list of your medications with you to share with us so we can watch for side effects. We can help relieve that parched feeling and the dental ailments associated with xerostomia to keep your mouth healthier and more comfortable.

Tip: Keep a glass of ice water next to your bed at night to relieve that cottonmouth feeling that hits you at 2:00 a.m.

Catherine L. Forster, D.D.S., Inc.

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WE NEED YOUR HELP!



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Office Hours

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

**Appointment and Emergency
Phone: (330) 492-7889**

**Web site:
www.cantonsmiles.com**

*Take advantage of
your coverage before
the year ends*

The end of the year is an important time to be sure you've taken full advantage of your insurance benefits. Restorative work and even checkups can often be scheduled in time to receive the benefits owed you, or pretax money you've put away for such expenses needs to be utilized by December 31. Survey your situation now to be sure you're getting the full extent of your benefits in accordance with your insurance and other plans.

Referral Rewards Program

Did you know we are accepting new patients? We are!

As our patients' mouths get healthier, we continue to need new patients to keep us busy. We would like your help to grow our practice.

Marketing can be expensive. During these difficult economic times, we could use your help to reduce our costs and would rather divert some of our marketing dollars to you!

We would like to acknowledge you for those people whom you refer to our office who become patients. If you do send a referral to our office, the following rewards apply:

1st REFERRAL—\$10 gas card

2nd REFERRAL—\$25 local restaurant gift certificate

3rd REFERRAL—\$40 off your (or family's) account, or a gift certificate

4th REFERRAL—It's a surprise you'll like.