



DENTAL HEALTH LETTER

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

Spring 2008

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Dental anxiety has often been fodder for comedians and Hollywood movies. Unfortunately, for many people, it is a very serious situation that keeps them from receiving the dental care they need. As dental professionals, it's important to us to help you remove any barriers that stand between you and good oral health.

We believe it's essential to deal with fears head-on. If you have anxiety about visiting our office, we want to know about it. Talking about your fears can often help you to allay them. Good communication between our staff and the patient is the first step toward a more relaxing dental experience. Once you have conveyed your concerns to us, we'll do our best to help you relax. We believe that knowledge empowers, and to that end, we'll spend as much time as you need explaining procedures and answering questions.

Our goal is for you to have a comfortable experience in our office. We want you to be able to undergo the necessary procedures for your dental health without added stress or anxiety.

Along those lines, we offer a wide variety of options in anesthesia. In some cases, we may simply prescribe an analgesic for you to use beforehand. In other situations, we will recommend a local anesthetic. When necessary, a sedative pill or type of oral conscious sedation may be utilized.

Dental anxiety is no joke to us—especially when it causes patients to forego necessary dental work. We'll do whatever we can to make your experience relaxed and comfortable. Your dental health is too important not to.

OUR GOAL

is for you to have a comfortable experience in our office.

To our dental family...

We would like to recognize our patients' accomplishments, such as awards, military service, etc., on our bulletin board. If you would like to participate, please help us by sending in your achievements throughout the year.

Thank you!



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



Good news! Oral health is improving!

Overall, our oral health as a nation is improving. Statistics show that more Americans are keeping their teeth into their senior years. In addition, fewer adults are developing gum disease. And, perhaps best of all, tooth decay among children over the age of 6 has dropped significantly.

Those over the age of 65 are more likely to keep their teeth. Loss of all teeth among seniors has come down about 7 percent. In part, this may be the result of the decrease in the number of adults with severe periodontal disease.

The reduced number of cavities children are experiencing is credited, at least in part, to dental sealants. Children over the age of 6 had 4 percent less decay in permanent teeth. In children over the age of 12, this number dropped about 9 percent. Dental sealants are plastic coatings that effectively seal out bacteria on the chewing surfaces. Combined with continued good oral home care, they can significantly reduce the chance of decay. Nearly 40 percent of children older than 12 have received sealants. ●●●●●

► But baby teeth are still at risk

Although most of the numbers concerning the overall dental health of Americans showed improvement, decay in baby teeth is spiking in the other direction. Statistics show that children between the ages of two and five had a four percent increase in decay in this decade. Fortunately, it doesn't have to be that way; most tooth decay can be prevented with proper care.

Preventing tooth decay in young children begins with professional dental visits by the age of one. Once a child's teeth appear, the parents should clean them with a cloth or very soft-bristled brush. Don't allow a child to fall asleep with a bottle containing anything but plain water. This is to prevent nursing-bottle mouth, which often results in decay.

In order for your child to develop good oral-hygiene habits, instruct them on how to choose healthy foods as well as teach them about proper brushing and flossing technique. Making healthy food choices has a marked effect on a child's dental health. Limiting the number of snacks is as important as choosing foods that are healthy for teeth. Fluoridated water should be part of a good diet because fluoride can help assure the healthy growth of teeth.

Instilling good brushing habits in a child should begin from the time they first reach for the toothbrush. Work with them until they are able to brush effectively on their own. Continue to floss the child's teeth until they have mastered that important task as well.

Good oral home care—including cleaning teeth after each meal—coupled with a dentally savvy diet and fluoride is a major step that parents can take to help grow healthy teeth in young children. Professional care beginning at a young age is the final factor in this equation.

Making George
smile

Enough about whether George Washington's teeth were wooden or ivory. The legend of his dentures has another side that has been explored by a team of forensic scientists, anthropologists, and artists. These professionals have worked together using the dentures to try to discover what the father of our country really looked like.

Based on the dentures and other information, the team recreated how Washington may have looked when he was president (at age 57)...when he commanded the troops during the Revolution (at age 45), and how he may have appeared as a 19-year-old surveyor. From this, three life-size figures were constructed to be displayed at Mount Vernon.

The team began by doing laser scans of his dentures. There were four sets of teeth that we know of. To construct them, Washington's dentist used animal teeth, ivory, human teeth, gold, and lead. Washington first began to lose his teeth in his twenties.

Unfortunately, the most common portrait we see of Washington—the one on the dollar bill—portrays him as somber. Note that the set of his mouth does not reveal those famous teeth. Hopefully, the newer versions of his look will give Americans a more accurate view of the man we so admire.

Dental health affects quality of life



Take steps to keep teeth healthy for a lifetime!

Do you think that deteriorating dental health goes hand in hand with aging? It's not necessarily true. Although the body changes with age, there are steps we can take to help keep our teeth healthy for a lifetime.

For instance, fluoride isn't just for kids. Fighting decay is a lifelong battle. Continuing to brush after each meal with a fluoride toothpaste can make a huge difference in dental health. However, brushing isn't enough. The incidence of periodontal disease can increase with age. Daily flossing is essential to keep gum disease at bay and reduce the risk of tooth loss.

There are some dental problems that come with aging which require special attention. Gums that recede can expose the roots of the teeth. These then become susceptible to decay. Making sure these areas get extra attention can help avoid this problem. A lack of saliva is common in seniors as well. This may be caused by a medical condition or

by a prescription drug. Because saliva is one of our best defenses against bacteria that cause decay, it's important to sip lots of plain water to wash away food debris and germs.

Keeping teeth into old age affects quality of life in a number of ways. Having your own teeth means being better able to chew and enjoy a wide variety of foods. That means better nutrition. It's also easier to speak clearly with your natural teeth. Evidence shows that seniors are keeping more of their own teeth into old age. In the 1960s, the average senior had fewer than 10 natural teeth left. Today, that number is approaching 20. Continued good oral care throughout your lifetime can help you to keep your teeth and enhance your quality of life as you age.

You can't avoid every food

Sometimes you may feel that if you want to keep your teeth, you should just give up eating. Well, not quite, but aside from carrot sticks and apples, what is there that doesn't cause tooth decay? Actually, there are quite a few foods that aren't too bad for teeth. Among these are raw fruits and vegetables, cheeses, and water. Most other foods can be ingested without problems, provided that you brush after each meal and floss daily.

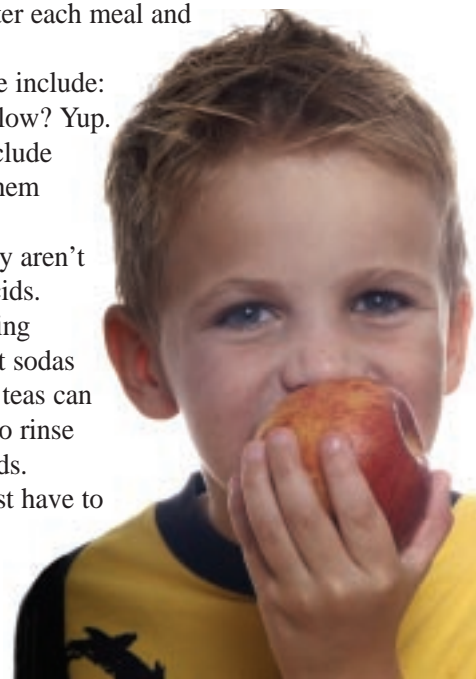
There are some foods, however, that should definitely be limited. These include:

→ **Super stickies**—What sticks to your teeth? Caramel? Sure. Marshmallow? Yup.

But what about brownies? Cake? Soft rolls? Crackers? All these foods include carbohydrates, and they have staying power when it comes to teeth. Eat them sparingly and brush extra-well afterward.

→ **Awful acids**—Acids in sour candies can do a number on teeth, but they aren't the only culprits. What may be more serious are beverages that contain acids. These bathe your teeth in acidic liquid as you sip them all day long, wearing away at the enamel that provides their first layer of protection. It's not just sodas that are a problem; fruit juices, sports drinks, flavored waters, and bottled teas can all be just as bad. Switch to plain water as much as you can, and be sure to rinse with water after ingesting acidic liquids as well as sugary and starchy foods.

You don't have to give up all the fun foods to keep your teeth...you just have to eat them sparingly and carefully. Of course, that would be better for your whole body, not just your oral health. Taking care of your teeth can be a smart move toward an overall healthier you.



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

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*Here's your
dental newsletter!*

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The information included in this newsletter is not intended as a substitute for dental advice. For your specific information, be sure to consult our office.

Registration form for **Great Strides**

We are asking for your help in making Great Strides! On Saturday, May 3, 2008, the Canton Great Strides Walk-A-Thon for Cystic Fibrosis will be held at McKinley Senior High School.

Cystic fibrosis (CF) is a genetic disease that affects more than 30,000 children and adults in the United States. A defective gene causes the body to produce abnormally thick, sticky mucus. The abnormal mucus impairs digestion and leads to chronic and sometimes fatal lung infections. Currently, there is no cure for CF; however, new therapies and treatments are being developed. PLEASE HELP US FIND A CURE!

- In-Kind Donors:** You or your organization can choose to donate an item of your choice to the walk, including food, drinks, goodies, etc.
- Team Leader:** Simply ask 5-10 of your closest friends, family members, or colleagues to join your team, or walk with us! WE REALLY NEED WALKERS!
Remind your walkers of the date of the walk and their \$150 fund-raising goal. Remember, ask 15 people for \$10 and you're done!
- Walker:** You don't have to be on a team to walk the walk! Join ours or simply go out and do a little of your own fund raising. Just keep in mind your goal of \$150.
- Volunteer:** We always need help the day of the walk! Help with registration, hand out t-shirts, help set up the walk route, or hand out water and food to the walkers.
- Personal Donation:** \$500, \$250, \$100, \$50, \$25, other \$ _____
(Please make checks payable to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.)
- Corporate Sponsorship:** There is a variety of levels at which you and/or your organization may wish to become a sponsor, including:

<input type="checkbox"/> Site Sponsor	\$5,000 donation	<input type="checkbox"/> Start/Finish Sponsor	\$500 donation
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<input type="checkbox"/> Kid's Corner Sponsor	\$750 donation		

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Please mail or fax this form to:

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Emily & Jennifer