

fromthedentists

No winter lasts forever, no Spring skips its turn. April is a promise that May is bound to keep, and we know it.

– Hal Borland

Hello!

Baseball season is underway and the flowers are blooming once again. That means that Spring is here, and we hope that everyone is enjoying the arrival of a new season.

For the upcoming quarter, we have chosen the Washington Oral Health Foundation for our charity. WOHF is a charitable foundation which provides educational programs and materials for the people of Washington. Their interactive, educational, and fun website can be viewed at www.wohfkidsconnect.com.

Check it out!

Go M's!

– L. Douglas Gray, DDS
Kenneth K. Lo, DDS

The time for action is now. It is never too late to do something.

– Antoine de Saint-Exupery

turnthepage

Pregnancy: Protect your teeth

Herbal Supplements: Healthy choice or dental disaster?

Boost Your Taste Buds

Children's Oral Health

Why are primary teeth important?

Though you lose them early in life, your primary teeth, also called baby teeth, are essential in the development and placement of your permanent teeth. Primary teeth maintain the spaces where permanent teeth will erupt and help develop proper speech patterns that would otherwise be difficult without maintenance of the space; crowding and misalignment can occur, resulting in more complicated treatment later. Baby teeth also are good primers for teaching your child good oral care habits. It is important to take care of your child's primary teeth. Even though primary teeth last only a few years, cavities and infection can take its toll, and may require expensive treatment to repair.

When do baby teeth come in?

Your child's primary teeth generally make their appearance when he or she is six or seven months old, though it can occur as early as birth. There are 20 primary teeth followed by 32 permanent teeth that will eventually replace them. Your child should have all his or her primary teeth at age three and will keep them until age five or six when they begin to loosen and fall out. This process usually lasts until the child is 12 or 13. Primary teeth fall out because permanent teeth are pushing them and by about age 14, children have a full set of 28 permanent teeth, plus four additional teeth, called wisdom teeth that grow behind the permanent teeth in late adolescence for a total of 32.



Can decay affect infants?

Yes. Tooth decay in infants and young children most often occurs in the upper front teeth, but also may affect other teeth. Sometimes

parents do not realize that a baby's teeth can decay soon after they first appear. The decay may even enter the underlying bone structure, which can hamper development of the permanent teeth. This problem is frequently referred to as baby bottle tooth decay. This kind of decay is caused by long-term exposure of a child's teeth to liquids containing sugars. When a child consumes a sugary liquid, acid attacks the teeth and causes decay. For this reason, never let your baby sleep with a bottle containing anything other than water.

How can children prevent damage to their teeth?

Children at school should rinse their mouth with water after meals, leaving their teeth free of sugar and acid.

Children also should seek sources of fluoridation. If you purchase bottled water, be sure that it is fluoridated.

Encourage children to drink tap or fountain water. Use a straw when drinking soda to keep sugar away from teeth. Remember, bottled juices are not a good alternative due to the high sugar content. Regular dental check-ups, combined with brushing with fluoride toothpaste also will help protect children's teeth.

Herbal Supplements & Dentistry

What we need to know...

As science finds out more about the beneficial effects of antioxidants, even greater interest has developed in natural foods and natural products. The use of self-administered herbal supplements has increased significantly in the last decade. More than \$4 billion is spent annually in North America on herbal medications.

Some people are embarrassed to admit to using herbal therapies; others believe that herbs are not drugs but nutritional substances. In one study, nearly 70% of participants did not inform their physicians or dentists about using them. This is alarming because among the most commonly sold herbal supplements, echinacea, feverfew, garlic, ginseng, ginkgo, St. John's wort, and (the now-banned) ephedra have the potential for adverse effects during or after procedures.

If you are taking herbal supplements, let us know so that we can provide the best care possible.



If you're pregnant, please tell us on your next visit. We'll want to pay special attention to your oral health. Certain drugs can affect the development of your child's teeth, and we will want to monitor the health of your gums. Research has linked gum disease and premature delivery. Regular checkups are important! Here are some useful tips.

Cravings & snacking - The more frequently you snack (particularly with sweet foods), the more likely you are to get decay, so consistent, regular

brushing and flossing is important.

Morning sickness - It's better to rinse your mouth out with water or a mouthrinse after morning sickness. Stomach acids can soften your tooth enamel, and brushing immediately afterwards might damage your teeth through abrasion.

Calcium - It's an old wives' tale that your growing baby will remove calcium from your teeth! But you may need additional calcium and phosphorous, and dairy products are beneficial.

Congratulations! Pregnancy & Oral Health

Signs Of Periodontal Disease

As many as 70% of women have some form of gum disease during pregnancy. Many symptoms will settle down once you've had your baby, but please call our office if you experience these signs:

- gums are swollen, tender, or red (not pink);
- gums bleed when you brush or floss;
- bad taste in your mouth is chronic;
- bad breath persists despite good oral care.



Good Taste & Your Tongue

Clean tongue ... clear palate!

If you've ever tried to curl your tongue into a tube, you know that practicing won't help. That's because it's a genetic trait. Similarly, taste palates vary from individual to individual.

Each of our 10,000 taste buds contains at least 300,000 receptors. The tongue's tip is most sensitive to sweetness, while salty and sour are sensed on the sides, bitterness at the back. Oddly, there is no such taste as "hot," even though chili is the second most popular seasoning in the world.

Plaque coatings can dull taste receptors, and cleansing the tongue can enhance our taste palates and help maintain oral health. When you brush, stick your tongue out as far as it will go, and gently brush it back to front with your toothbrush. Or rinse a clean teaspoon under warm water, then place the open side down on your tongue, and drag it forward. Cleaning your tongue regularly makes your mouth healthier, your breath sweeter, and your food tastier. But it won't help with that tube thing...



Teeth Whitening Q & A

Convenient, reliable teeth whitening can dramatically improve your smile. More than ten million North Americans will get their teeth whitened this year. Here are the answers to some common questions you may have about this popular procedure.

What is teeth whitening?

It is a procedure designed to remove stains and discoloration and lighten teeth pigmentation. Teeth whitening can be done safely, quickly, and reliably with our supervision.

Are teeth whitening procedures safe?

Absolutely. After more than 100 years of refinement and improvement, supervised whitening is a common procedure. Some individuals may experience mild, temporary tooth sensitivity.

We can help you decide on your best whitening option!

How white can I expect my teeth to look?

Whiteness depends on the degree of discoloration. Teeth can be whitened up to eight shades. We'll help you decide on the best level for your smile.

Is there such a thing as being too young or old?

Whitening has become the most-demanded cosmetic procedure for patients under twenty, according to the Academy of General Dentistry. After childhood, age is not a factor and most people can benefit from whitening.

Got You Covered!

Facts on dental sealants

What Is A Dental Sealant?

A dental sealant is a liquid plastic material that hardens to form a shield over the chewing surfaces of the teeth. It is applied to decay-prone surfaces of the teeth, usually the back molars and pre-molars.

Why Get Sealants?

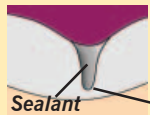
Sealants keep out the germs and food that cause tooth decay. Food and



As teeth develop, deep grooves called fissures naturally occur and where these grooves cross is called pits. These areas account for more than 50% of cavities among children.



Dental sealant is applied to the teeth and flows into the pits and fissures. It is a plastic tooth-colored material that creates an impenetrable barrier to bacteria and decay.



Dental sealant provides lasting protection against decay as long as the seal remains intact.

Sealant Tooth fissure

germs can get stuck in rough, uneven surface areas where toothbrush bristles cannot reach. Germs in the mouth change the sugar in food to acid which can start a cavity in the tooth. Sealants *prevent* decay from ever starting.

Who Should Get Sealants?

Children should get sealants on their permanent molars as soon as the teeth come in, before decay has a chance to attack the teeth. But adults can still get decay, especially patients afflicted with dry mouth, which affects about one-third of the adult population. Sealants can also help protect worn and sensitive surfaces on adult teeth.

How Are Sealants Put On?

The tooth is cleaned, dried, and prepared for bonding with the sealant. When applied, the liquid sealant hardens in just a few seconds.



Besides Sealants, Are There Other Ways To Prevent Tooth Decay?

Yes! The best way you can help prevent tooth decay is to brush with fluoride toothpaste, drink fluoridated water, and floss regularly. Sealants and fluoride used together provide the best defense against tooth decay.

officeinformation

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Aaliyah, Debbie, Jennifer
..... Chairside Assistants

Brush • Floss • Smile



First Dental Visit

Making it the best it can be

Your child's first trip to the dental office is an important milestone. We like to suggest that they come to us before any real problems arise. That way the child can have fun getting a tour of the office and taking a ride in the chair.

While your child enjoys a game of show and tell about the dental instruments, we can check for early signs of tooth or jaw problems, and check out your use of fluoride in toothpaste and drinking water. If everything is in good shape, we'll set up a regular time interval for recall visits.

By making your child's first ride in the chair a pleasant and interesting experience, we're building a firm foundation for a lifetime of healthy and well-cared-for smiles. First impressions last!



How Can You Help Your Child Prevent Tooth Decay?

Parents should take their infant to the dentist just after the first tooth appears. Brushing teeth after meals, regular flossing and fluoride treatments

Children should be supervised in proper flossing and brushing techniques

are the best ways to prevent tooth decay. Children should also be supervised as they brush. A good rule of thumb is that when children can dress themselves and tie their own shoes, then they are ready to brush by themselves. Children should be supervised in proper flossing and brushing techniques until the age of 10.

If you have any concerns about your child's dental health or want some tips on preventing tooth decay, ask us.

