

UPDATE

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Be Committed To Your Smile

Protect Your Teeth & Gum Health

Research now shows that your oral health has an impact on your overall health. The bacteria of gum disease has been linked to coronary artery disease, stroke, memory loss, diabetes, and preterm babies. It is also the number one cause of tooth loss in this country. Once tooth loss begins, an entirely new set of ordeals begins.

For those who are missing natural teeth, most are familiar with the associated discomfort, inconvenience, and embarrassment dentures or partials cause. These problems do not stop there. When natural tooth roots are no longer present in the jaw bone, the bone begins to shrink in depth and height. As this occurs, the denture or partial has an ever-changing foundation on which to balance. Although denture adhesives lessen the amount of movement, they are typically dependable for only brief periods.

If you have experienced tooth loss, investigate the latest options to replace teeth. If you have all your natural teeth, do all you can to protect them as well as the health of your gums.

Achieve a smile that complements your life.

Your smile is often the first thing others notice. An appealing smile sends a positive message to those around you, whether in business or social settings.

If you are not happy with the appearance of your smile, consider some of the many options available in cosmetic dentistry. Today's technology, techniques, and materials provide an exceptional look, feel, and longevity in smile enhancement. In addition to the affordability of today's whitening techniques, porcelain crowns, veneers, and bridges can recreate a smile that looks natural, even reflecting light as natural teeth.

Pursue a smile that you'll be proud to share. Today's dentistry can make your smile look more attractive, and have you smiling more often and more confidently.

Don't let insurance coverage dictate the extent of your care.

Insurance coverage provides tremendous peace of mind should major medical needs arise. For your basic health needs, coverage is generally designed to help you with selected services. In most instances, however, there are limits to coverage far less than the long-term best interest of the patient.

Once you have a thorough understanding of your current oral health needs, you can make decisions to help prevent problems, rather than continually repair those which occur. The time and cost to repair teeth and gums is much greater than preventing problems in the first place. Do what is necessary to avoid these problems regardless of what insurance covers.

Smile often!

Smiling conditions muscles in your face and perks up your day. Smiles also have a tendency to be contagious, so share yours with others and enjoy the results! It's the universal language we should all know fluently!



Although oral jewelry has become fashionable, those in the business often fail to warn their patrons of the potential hazards that can result from tongue piercing.

Common problems can result in costly repairs. This includes chips or cracks to teeth, crowns, and fillings. Other problems, which can emerge, are allergies, gum irritation and infection. In some instances, nerve and blood vessel damage can occur, which cannot be repaired.

Even though some like the look of a pierced tongue, the tongue barbell can trap bacteria and cause a build up of plaque. This is a recipe for bad breath.

Because the tongue reacts to ailments and reveals symptoms of ill health, including oral cancer, tongue piercing could mask these important warning signs. For instance, discolorations, numbness, and swelling can indicate more serious health problems. These could be mistakenly attributed to a reaction to tongue piercing.

Our advice? Don't! If you have, or your child has had his or her tongue pierced, arrange for frequent oral exams, at least every four months. During these visits, instruction will be provided on how to watch for warning signs and how to avoid damaging teeth.

GRINDING AWAY WHILE YOU SLEEP?

Nighttime teeth grinding is a habit of one-third of Americans and employs ten times the force of normal chewing. While it tends to disrupt restful sleep, grinding also contributes to loose teeth, headaches, pain in the temples and soreness in the jaw. For some people, grinding becomes so intense that it wakes them (or their spouse) up!

If the ridges on tooth surfaces look flat or you occasionally wake up with jaw soreness, you may be grinding your teeth while you sleep. To prevent upper teeth from rubbing against lower teeth, we can create a custom-made mouth guard. This gives an exact fit so it is comfortable for sleeping. The firm material of which it is constructed often eliminates the urge to grind.

If you suspect you are grinding your teeth at night (or hear your spouse), call our office at (843) 871-6351 or mention this to Dr. Andrews at your next visit.



Protecting Your Smile In *Today's Economy*

many in our nation are feeling the pinch of today's economic challenges. Fortunately, the technology we've added to our office enables patients to enjoy treatment that requires minimal visits with optimal results per appointment.

The best investment you can make in your overall health and well-being is to prevent problems in the first place. This includes washing hands frequently to help prevent colds, eating a healthy diet, drinking lots of water, and exercising on a regular basis.

You can also reduce costs required for dentistry through prevention. Your regular check-ups are designed to help

you avoid problems and to keep your smile its best. We recommend every 6 months unless you have a periodontal condition, with which we recommend check-ups every 3 to 4 months. Because research has shown that your oral health is linked to your overall health, devote particular attention to oral care at home and stay involved with your hygiene appointments.

If you would like to know more about financial options and payment plans, mention this to any staff member at your next visit or call prior to your appointment. We are always happy to explain ways to allow your family to enjoy good health in a way that is manageable to your budget.



IS YOUR MOUTH DRY?

A dry mouth can damage your teeth and ruin your breath!

Without adequate saliva to lubricate your mouth, wash away food, and neutralize the acids produced by plaque, the potential for cavities greatly increases. This condition, commonly known as dry mouth, may contribute to other problems, including a constant sore throat, difficulty swallowing, hoarseness, and dry nasal passages.

Certain medical disorders can contribute to a dry mouth. Often, a side effect of antihistamines, decongestants, pain killers and certain high blood pressure medications includes dry mouth. Even beverages such as coffee and those that contain alcohol can inhibit saliva flow. Along with decreasing our sense of taste

and smell, a normal part of the aging process reduces saliva, states Dr. Andrews.

To help keep your mouth moist, Dr. Andrews suggests sipping plenty of water throughout the day. In addition, your physician may be able to suggest alternative medications that are less drying. Chewing sugar free gum can help to stimulate saliva flow. Oral rinses are also available to replace moisture in the mouth.

It is important to make us aware of medications you have begun taking since your medical history form was last completed. Dr. Andrews adds, "This information helps to unify your oral well-being with your overall health."

A HONEY OF A CURE!



Research results from the University of Waikato, New Zealand recently revealed that an enzyme in honey can stop the growth of dental plaque bacteria. It also halts the production of dextran, which the bacteria excrete in order to adhere to tooth surfaces.

It appears there is an enzyme in honey that produces hydrogen peroxide, giving honey an antimicrobial property, states Dr. Andrews.

Clinical research has also shown the effectiveness of honey in treating inflamed or infected wounds. Unlike antiseptics, honey is gentle on tissues and helpful in treating swelling and pain. It also stimulates cell growth that repair tissues damaged by infection.

For more on this research and other dental news, visit the web site of the American Dental Association: www.ada.org.