

THE DENTIST'S L E T T E R

2005 Newsletter

What a busy year 2005 has been. As we pause at this time of year to reflect on how blessed we are to have health, family, and sound minds, I must first begin by acknowledging each of you with thanks for allowing the entire team and myself the opportunity to serve you and your families' dental needs. Of course, I could not serve you without the outstanding staff that surrounds me. Thank you, **Michelle, Tessa, Adalyn, Shonda, Nancy, Melanie,** and our new co-op, **Crishonda,** for helping me serve with excellence.

As we attempt to continue to improve our services to you, we have implemented the use of digital radiography. This technology enables us to get diagnostic radiographs, or x-rays, of your teeth **at a fraction of the radiation of traditional x-rays.** They allow us to receive them almost instantly, enabling you to view them as well. Also, we are proud to announce that we offer "ZOOM 2 Whitening" as seen on ABC's *Extreme Makeover*. You will see that a number of these articles deal mainly with cosmetic and restorative



dentistry we perform. Please feel free to bring up any questions you may have with one of the staff for clarity.

Also in 2005, we established an adjunct facility. The Wellness Center is located in Suite 1-D. I invite each of you to stop by the wellness center to take a tour of the

facility and take advantage of scheduling a free mini-facial or hand massage by one of our licensed professionals. We have a licensed massage therapist and aesthetician available to pamper you with relaxing and enhancing body treatments.

We are looking forward to providing you with "**par excellent**" services both in the dental office and the wellness center.

Thank you again for all the support you have given to our office and for all the new patients you refer. Make sure to check with the staff on the "tokens of thanks" that are available to existing patients who refer new ones to our office. Many blessings to you and your family as we look forward to serving you in 2006.

THE SCIENCE OF COSMETIC DENTISTRY— *See what we can do for you!*

We can improve your smile. If you aren't happy with the look of your teeth, chances are good that we can change that. If you tend to smile with your mouth closed or just feel that you don't have the beautiful smile you've always wanted, don't despair. Advances in cosmetic dentistry offer myriad ways to reform, reshape, or whiten teeth that aren't what you'd like them to be. Here's a sampling of the procedures we offer and what they can do for you:

■ **BONDING**—This is the foundation of many cosmetic procedures. It can be used for teeth that have chips or cracks, or that are broken or stained. It's also excellent for gaps between teeth.

■ **WHITENING**—This process can lighten and whiten teeth that have been stained or discolored by age. Both live teeth and teeth that have undergone root canal procedures can benefit from whitening.

■ **COMPOSITES**—Tooth-colored fillings can be used to fill new cavities or replace old, dark amalgam fillings. When composites are used to fill your teeth, no one will know that you ever had a cavity.

■ **PORCELAIN VENEERS**—Fine porcelain covers in colors that match your natural teeth can conceal stains and chips, fill spaces between teeth, or be used for teeth that are

(continued on back page)

Thank you for all your referrals. We appreciate them!

The next best thing to your own teeth

Dental implants are the best way to replace your natural teeth. Many patients find that after they have become accustomed to their implants, they forget that they aren't their real teeth. That's because dental implants are placed right into your existing gums and jaw to remain solidly in place. Implants can be used to provide support for a denture or to anchor a bridge, or they can be used in place of a bridge. Today's implants can be placed either against the bone or directly into the jawbone with posts that hold the dentures in place.

The advantages over using a denture are many. First, dental implants have been proven to be successful over the last several years. Second, they can help save teeth, since, unlike a bridge, they are not attached to the adjacent teeth, but directly into the jaw. Third, they appear and feel much like your own natural teeth. Implants can restore confidence because they don't interfere with speaking or eating, and they look like natural teeth. You won't have to worry about them slipping or causing problems when you try to eat certain foods. They are just as convenient as your real teeth, too—no more soaking or scrubbing. Just brush them as you would your own teeth.

With so many advantages, aren't dental implants worth considering? If you are in good health and have fairly good oral health (including enough jawbone for us to anchor to), talk to us about the possibility of having implants put in. We can answer your questions and help you decide if this procedure is the best option for you.



We're going DIGITAL!

Conventional x-rays were necessary to discover certain dental problems that weren't apparent to the naked eye. But now a new advance in dentistry—digital imaging—has rendered them obsolete. This exciting technology uses special sensors that offer a number of advantages over conventional x-rays.

Among the many benefits of digital x-rays are:

- ✓ The details of decay can be more accurately scrutinized. The end result is that cavities are discovered earlier and treated before they have a chance to destroy teeth.
- ✓ There is no need to wait for picture development. The image is on the screen instantaneously. This is better for us and the environment.
- ✓ X-ray exposure time is reduced drastically. This means that having digital images made of your teeth is even safer than conventional x-rays.

Want to learn more about this exciting new technology available right in our office? Ask us next time you visit. We'll be happy to tell you all about this equipment and how it can help us take better care of your teeth.

THE ADVANTAGES OF VENEERS

Porcelain veneers have advantages over other forms of cosmetic dentistry. As with other techniques, porcelain veneers are a wonderful way to restore teeth that are stained, chipped, worn, or even misaligned. However, porcelain veneers are endowed with a couple of benefits that other forms of restoration lack.

STAIN RESISTANCE

Because these veneers are comprised of porcelain, they also have the stain resistance of that nonporous material. The actual veneers are smooth and glassy, and resist staining from exposure to certain substances. These include beverages, such as coffee, tea, or red wine. They also include tobacco staining caused by cigarettes. Some patients seek cosmetic procedures to cover staining and are disappointed to discover their new smiles beginning to fade because of their attachment to coffee or some other substance that causes staining. That's far less likely to be a problem with porcelain.

NATURALLY BEAUTIFUL

Many cosmetic procedures result in natural-looking smiles, but porcelain veneers have the advantage of translucency. Natural teeth are translucent because the enamel allows some light to shine through and then reflect off the more solid tooth structure underneath. The glassy surface of the porcelain covering the opaque cement and natural tooth underneath means that the restoration provides the most lifelike coloring and look of all the cosmetic techniques available.

No, porcelain veneers will not be identical to your real teeth, but they will be very close to the originals—only your dentist will know for sure.

A parent's responsibility

It begins with washing the gums. Even a very tiny baby's gums should be wiped with a clean, damp washcloth. Once teeth begin to appear, they should be brushed gently by the parent until the child is old enough to brush on their own. Of course, brushing after each meal and flossing daily are the basics of home care, but there is so much more to teaching your child about good oral health.

Fluoride, either in drinking water or given through supplements, is an essential part of developing strong teeth that will be more resistant to decay. Fluoride treatments can be done in our office as well. Brushing with a fluoride toothpaste and using a fluoride rinse are also recommended.

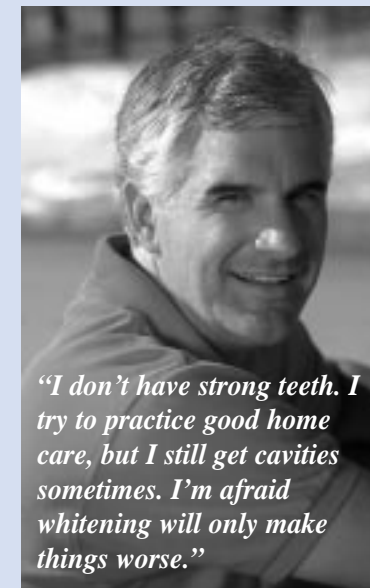
A healthy diet is a key ingredient in keeping teeth healthy and free of decay. A diet that is high in raw fruits and vegetables and low in sugary items, such as soft drinks, candy, and baked goods, is the best choice. Milk should be consumed regularly, but fruit juices should be used sparingly, while plain water should be a staple. Avoid sodas, sports drinks, and bottled teas, which are loaded with sugar.

Last of all, you need to keep an eye on your children's home care. It's best to check their teeth each morning and night to be sure they have brushed thoroughly. Contact us if you have findings that don't look good. We'll let you know when it's time for them to start flossing, since this can be different for each child. If you want to know more about what to look for, just ask. We'll be happy to help you fulfill your responsibility to help your child grow a mouthful of healthy teeth.



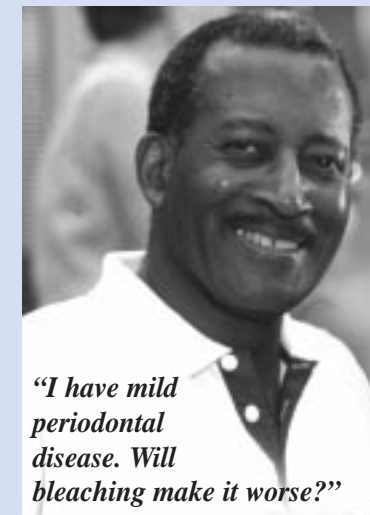
Whitening worries

Many people wish they had whiter teeth, but they are concerned about the process. Rumors about how whitening can damage or weaken teeth still abound. Let's address a few of these concerns.



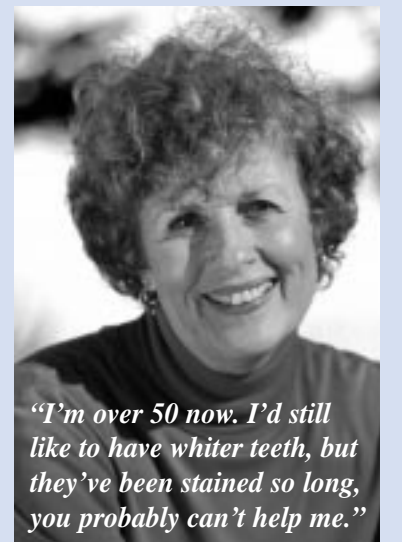
"I don't have strong teeth. I try to practice good home care, but I still get cavities sometimes. I'm afraid whitening will only make things worse."

The bleaching system we use is designed to gently remove stains from teeth. It does not threaten the long-term integrity of the teeth.



"I have mild periodontal disease. Will bleaching make it worse?"

Some of the bleaching agents in use were once treatments for gum disease. The oxygen that is released when we bleach teeth actually destroys some types of bacteria that are detrimental to gums.



"I'm over 50 now. I'd still like to have whiter teeth, but they've been stained so long, you probably can't help me."

Tooth whitening is safe and effective for anyone who is a teen or older. A whiter smile that looks natural is an attractive asset that can make you look years younger than you are.

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*Here's your
dental newsletter!*

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Crown lengthening reveals a beautiful smile

Do you feel that your smile is too “gummy”? Do you think your teeth appear too small? Crown lengthening—sometimes called gum contouring—is a dental procedure that can expose more of your beautiful smile. Crown lengthening is also used to treat some periodontal problems or in cases where a tooth has been damaged by an accident or decay.

The procedure involves reducing the gum tissue to expose some of the bone that supports the tooth. The exposed bone will then be removed to reveal the tooth beneath it. After that, the gums are reattached to the tooth

and allowed to heal.

Before the crown lengthening takes place, the area will be treated with a local anesthetic. The procedure is generally done in a single visit, and a few stitches and possibly some packing may be necessary. The patient often returns to normal activities on the day after the procedure, and the stitches are removed a week or so later. Healing will continue over the next six weeks or so.

A beautiful new smile could be yours with crown lengthening. Ask us about ways we can improve your smile and boost your self-confidence.

THE SCIENCE OF... *(continued from front page)*

somewhat crooked or not shaped nicely. Porcelain is also used in inlays and onlays, and for some crowns and bridges.

■ **SHAPING**—The enamel of your own teeth can be contoured to improve their shape and look. This technique is often used on teeth that are crowded or otherwise not spaced evenly. It can also be used to contour long teeth into

more attractive shapes and lengths.

Modern dental technology has given us the solutions to most cosmetic problems. Almost anyone who wants a more beautiful, but still natural-looking, smile can benefit from the services we offer. Why wait another day? Call us at **302-655-8387** to find out how we can enhance your smile.

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Office Hours

Monday 7:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m.
Tuesday 7:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m.
Wednesday 7:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m.
Thursday 7:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

*(Lunch hour for the office is
1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.)*

Appointment and Emergency

Phone: 302-655-8387

DENTAL TEAM

Office Business Manager

(in training): LaTessa Taylor

Front Desk

& Clinical Coordinator:

Adalyn Pretlow

Dental Hygienists:

Shonda Garrett
Nancy Moxley

Dental Assistant:

Michelle LaMonica

Dental Cooperative Student:

Crishonda Stephens