

# Patient NEWSLETTER

## PATIENT Newsletter

**Produced for  
the patients of  
Edward R. Kusek,  
D.D.S. &  
Angela Curry, D.D.S.**

**Fall 2008**

### **DENTAL TEAM**

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Judith Pastrano  
Jeanette Miranda  
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Amanda Kusek  
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Courtney Struble  
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***In celebration of  
the beginning of  
my 25th year of  
practice, we will  
offer \$75 for  
each referral to  
the practice, to be  
used for future  
dental needs.***

Expires 9/1/09.

**GREETINGS!**

The end of summer is upon us as I write this letter. This summer was a busy and interesting one, and included me being asked to speak in Denver, preparing for the lecture, only to be disappointed by my flight getting cancelled and not having the opportunity to lecture after all. I even drove to Omaha in hopes of getting a flight to Denver, and missed the flight by two minutes!

I will be lecturing in Ontario, Canada, on September 12 on lasers in implant dentistry. At the end of October, I will be presenting at the Academy of Implant Dentistry. Hopefully I will also have two articles published in the next few months. One article has been a real learning experience—I had to rewrite it three times!

The computer-assisted design crowns have been a big plus to the dentistry we can provide to our patients. There are no impressions and no temporaries, with the results on the same day. The fit is far superior to old technology, which means longer-lasting crowns and less postoperative sensitivity.

As my family gets older, their lives and interests continue to change. Adam, my oldest, is now 23 years old, and it seems like only yesterday that he was a toddler. He is living in Des Moines, Iowa, and still working for Monsanto. We were fortunate that he was able to join us again for family vacation. He told his younger brother that as long as we are paying, he will be there! Amanda has joined me in my practice as a dental hygienist. I have heard she possesses my soft touch. She has finally hit the 21-year-old mark and enjoys showing her ID! Alex is in his last year of high school! Has not decided on a college yet, but “Hey,” as he says, “there’s lots of time.” Alex will be participating in soccer for the high school, and the team looks promising. This will be my last effort with coaching after 17 years in the sport. As a personal accomplishment, I was able to win five 5K road races this year in my age group. My soccer players still think they are faster than me...and they are right!

Again, thank you for referring family and friends. Remember that we are offering \$75 certificates for each referral during my anniversary of 25 years in practice.

***Thank you for all your referrals. We appreciate them!***

# 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 the feelings of welcome and relaxation that comprise the natural response to one.

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, women's smiles have been reduced in number from 200 per day when they were infants to fewer than 70. Men smile fewer than ten times per day. A good smile should come naturally, but a little practice can't hurt.

Stand in front of the mirror. Open your lips gradually and let your smile spread from your mouth up to your eyes. 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 Rock Star and Red Bull 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.

FAMILY & IMPLANT  
DENTISTRY

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*Here's your  
dental newsletter!*

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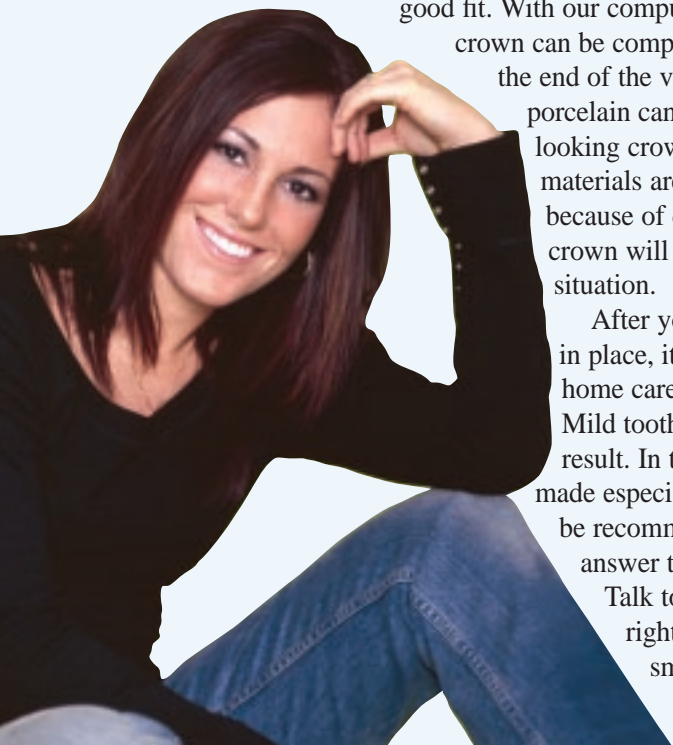
The information included in this newsletter is not intended as a substitute for dental advice. For your specific information, be sure to consult our office.

## The cosmetic value of a crown

Many people don't think of "crowns" when they think of cosmetic dental procedures, but crowns provide important aesthetic as well as functional advantages to teeth. Dental problems that can often be resolved with crowns include teeth that are broken, chipped, worn, or heavily filled. They can also cover teeth that are stained or misshapen. Crowns also provide stability when a tooth is cracked or otherwise weakened.

In our office, crowns are usually completed in one visit. The process often begins with anesthesia to numb the area around the tooth to be crowned. In some cases, the tooth may need to be filed to accommodate the crown. Or, in other situations, the tooth may need to be built up before a crown can be placed. Next, an impression of the tooth will be made to be sure the new crown and the opposing tooth will be a good fit. With our computer-aided technology, the crown can be completed and placed before the end of the visit. Resin, ceramic, and porcelain can all be used to create natural-looking crowns, but some of these materials are better suited to back teeth because of durability. The choice of a crown will depend on your specific situation.

After your beautiful new crown is in place, it will require the same good home care you give your natural teeth. Mild tooth sensitivity can sometimes result. In that situation, toothpaste made especially for sensitive teeth may be recommended. Maybe a crown is the answer to your cosmetic-dental issue. Talk to us. We can recommend the right procedure to change your smile for the better.



FAMILY & IMPLANT  
DENTISTRY

**Dr. Edward R. Kusek**  
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### Office Hours

Monday	8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Tuesday	9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.
Wednesday	8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Thursday	8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Friday	8:00 a.m.-Noon

**Appointment and Emergency  
Phone: 605-371-3443  
Web site: [www.drkusek.com](http://www.drkusek.com)**

### Dental fact

Gum disease is one of the main causes of tooth loss in adults and has been linked to heart disease and strokes.

