

Patient NEWSLETTER

PATIENT Newsletter

Produced for
the patients of
Edward R. Kusek, D.D.S.

Summer 2009

DENTAL TEAM

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Greetings,

Summer has finally arrived! Unfortunately, as I am sitting here writing this, the weather is cold and rainy. This summer I am taking a continuing education/vacation trip to Northern California. My family hopes to do some white-water rafting in Yosemite National Park and sight-seeing of San Francisco.

Alex (18), as of this newsletter, has been working for the city, mowing in Sherman Park to make extra cash for college. He registers for college in mid-June and hasn't heard yet who his randomly chosen roommate will be. Amanda (21) completed her bachelor's degree from USD. She is busy with friends, weddings, etc., but says it is nice to be finished with school. Adam (24) is experiencing what it means to be on his own. He is working for Monsanto and is learning all sorts of things about genetic crops. My wife, Jody, would like to thank those of you who have visited her store, *Forget Me Not*. She continues to travel to different markets to find new and unique items, so her inventory is changing all the time!

Again, thank you for the referrals of family and friends. I would also like to remind you that we offer a \$75 credit toward future dental visits for each referral!



Thank you for all your referrals. We appreciate them!

DIABETES AND DENTAL HEALTH



People with diabetes are more prone to periodontal disease and likely to suffer from severe cases of this destroyer of dental health. Gum disease is the most common cause of tooth loss because it destroys the jawbone that supports teeth, and may ultimately loosen the teeth.

THE BLOOD-GLUCOSE CONNECTION

Blood-glucose levels in a diabetic are strongly connected to the patient's likelihood of suffering from complications of periodontal disease. The mouth of a diabetic will be a more conducive environment to the bacteria that cause gum disease, and diabetics are more susceptible to infection. Likewise, the presence of an infection will make blood-glucose levels more difficult to control.

A DRY ENVIRONMENT

Diabetics tend to have a reduced salivary flow. Because saliva plays an important role in washing away food debris and bacteria in the mouth, a lack of saliva can contribute to tooth decay and periodontal disease.

COOPERATIVE EFFORT

Keeping bacteria at bay in the mouth of a diabetic requires a coordinated effort between the patient and his or her dentist. Controlling blood-glucose levels and careful home care, including brushing after each meal and flossing daily, are things the patient can do to help. Often, a special appointment schedule is necessary to help keep the dental health of a diabetic patient the best it can be.

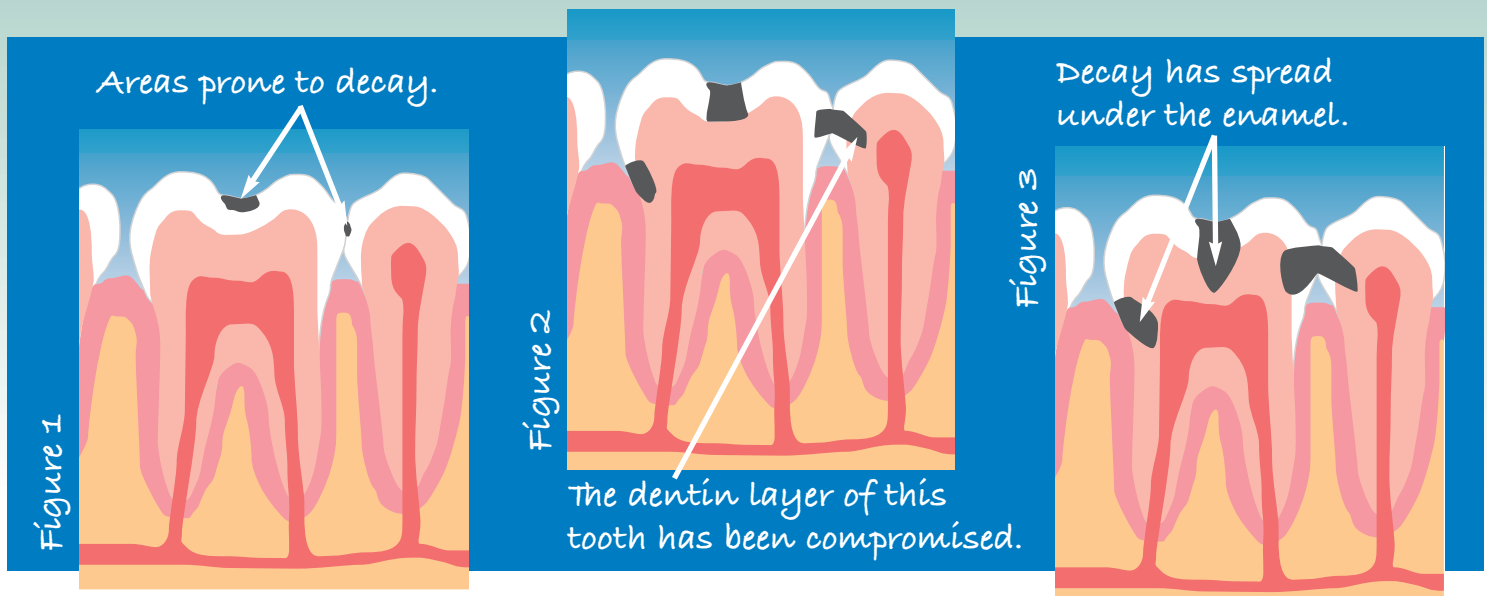
Tooth decay EXPOSED

The very first sign of dental caries is usually an area of the tooth that appears compromised. These may appear on the chewing surface or between teeth. If we notice a weakened area during an examination, we may recommend fluoride treatments to protect the tooth.

If the compromised area is not treated, the decay may spread through the enamel and into the dentin. Because the dentin is relatively soft compared to enamel, decay spreads

more rapidly when it reaches this part of the tooth.

Once the bacteria that cause decay reach the dentin, they tend to continue their destructive path following the dentinal tubules that travel from the enamel toward the roots of the tooth. Once the pulp of the tooth has been compromised, an abscess may form. When the cavity reaches this stage, root canal treatment may be necessary to save the tooth.



When your mouth hurts...

Ever try to go to the gym when your mouth hurts? Mouth pain, particularly toothache, just seems to affect everything you do. It can have a number of causes, including fractures of the tooth, a filling that has been damaged, or an abscess, infection, or cavity.

Tooth pain can manifest itself in a number of ways. Some patients feel throbbing, persistent pain, or sensitivity to hot and cold. Others only feel the discomfort when brushing the affected tooth or chewing. In some cases, swelling and inflammation of the gums may occur. A bad taste in the mouth, fever, and sometimes headache may accompany the pain.

Although toothache pain can vary, most patients agree on one thing: When your mouth hurts, you want relief. Any toothache that lasts more than a day or so or is accompanied by fever or earache should be brought to the attention of a dentist. Fever or difficulty opening the mouth fully is also a sign that professional treatment is necessary.

An examination, x-rays, and other tests may be necessary to determine the nature of the problem and decide on a course of treatment.

Relieving pain and restoring the tooth will be the goals of the treatment. Antibiotics may be necessary if infection is present. A root canal is sometimes recommended to save the tooth.

THE RIGHT GUARD



Mouthguards can reduce a child's chances of sustaining a mouth injury by up to 60 times. The likelihood that the front teeth will suffer permanent injury will be diminished, and the risk of a tooth or jaw fracture will decrease.

A mouthguard that's customized to fit a child's mouth will offer the best protection. It's also important to choose a sport-specific guard that provides the amount of protection that's necessary. Basketball and softball are sports that require a universal guard. Sports such as baseball and racquetball require heavy protection, and hockey—whether field, ice, or street—calls for maximum protection.

A custom-fitted mouthguard will be both comfortable and functional. Mouth discomfort and ulcers associated with boil-and-bite guards will not be issues with a guard that fits the child's jaws and teeth like it was made for them... because it was.

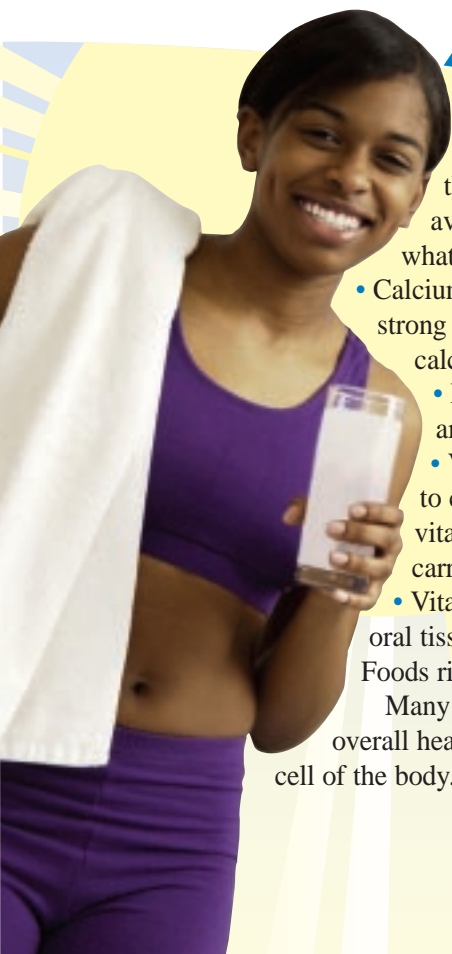
Mouthguards should be worn whenever practicing or training so that the mouth and teeth are protected at all times. Costs associated with an injury that results in a knocked-out tooth can mean expenses of many thousands of dollars over a lifetime. Investing in a custom mouthguard now could save a great deal of money later.

A diet that will brighten your smile

If you think a diet that's healthy for your teeth is just about avoiding sugar, you're definitely missing out on what certain vitamins and nutrients can do for your smile.

- Calcium—As a child, you surely heard that milk was good for growing strong teeth because it is rich in calcium. As an adult, however, you may not realize that calcium is still necessary to help keep your teeth healthy.
- Milk isn't the only good source of calcium for people of all ages. Yogurt, cheese, and broccoli are all rich in calcium and add variety to your diet.
- Vitamin A is an important nutrient for teeth for a couple of reasons. First, it is necessary for teeth to continue to produce enamel—the outer coating that helps keep bacteria at bay. A lack of this vitamin can lead to bleeding gums that are more prone to periodontal disease. Sources include eggs, carrots, and spinach.
- Vitamin C is known for its suspected abilities in warding off colds. It can contribute to assuring that oral tissues receive adequate oxygen and nutrients, and can lower the incidence of sores in the mouth. Foods rich in vitamin C include citrus fruits, such as oranges and grapefruits, and kiwi.

Many people choose to use supplements to obtain vitamins and nutrients they need for their dental and overall health. However, it's far more delicious to choose foods that are high in the nutrients that feed each cell of the body. A healthy and tasty diet can give you more than one reason to smile.



FAMILY & IMPLANT
DENTISTRY

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*Here's your
dental newsletter!*

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FIGHTING FOR THE HEALTH OF YOUR MOUTH

New weapons help detect decay and prevent gum disease

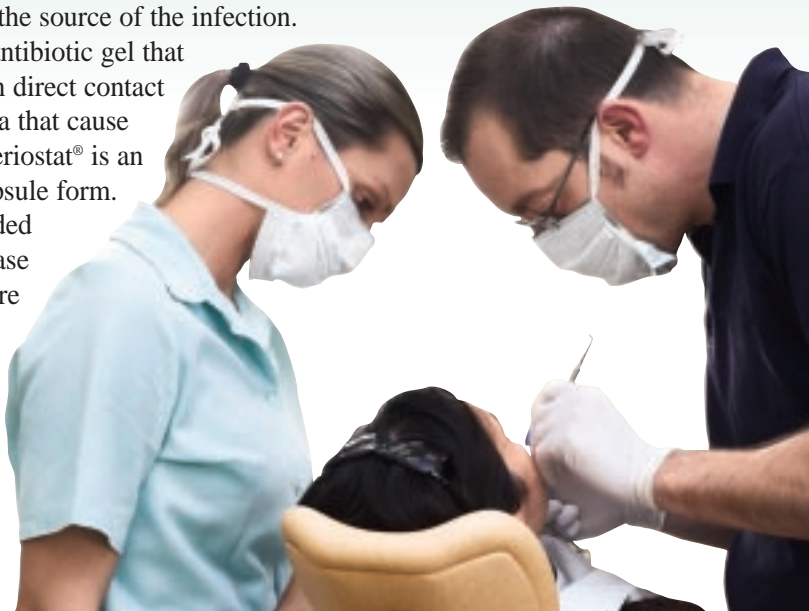
As your dental-health providers, we're always interested in new ways to fight tooth decay. Several new products are providing additional weapons to add to our arsenal.

DIAGNOdent is a handheld laser that can be used to detect hidden decay in your teeth. The harmless laser scans the teeth below the surface to tell us immediately whether decay is present. The laser improves overall cavity detection by more than 20 percent, and enables us to discover cavities while they are still small and can be treated more conservatively.

Gum disease is one of the most prolific infections on the planet. Detecting it early is essential to treating it effectively. The STM Probe is a quick and easy way to measure periodontal pockets and detect gum disease. The presence of periodontal disease has been linked to heart disease and increased potential for stroke—another reason why early detection is so important.

If gum disease is discovered, we now have new treatments that go right to the source of the infection.

Atridox® is an antibiotic gel that can be placed in direct contact with the bacteria that cause gum disease. Periostat® is an antibiotic in capsule form. It is recommended when gum disease has reached more advanced stages.



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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**

ENCOURAGE

YOUR KIDS

TO BRUSH

THEIR TEETH

AT LEAST

TWICE

A DAY!

