

Dr. Thomas'

TOOTH TALK

Produced for the Patients of Drs. James Thomas & Paul Chappel

Winter 2001/2002

FROM THE DENTISTS

Cappuccino Or Latte?

As the cooler weather approaches, that hot cappuccino, latte, or plain old-fashioned comforting cup of tea looks more and more attractive. But as the gourmet coffee and tea craze continues, and consumption increases with the chilly autumn breezes, connoisseurs may be getting more than that nice warm feeling: stained and discolored teeth!

When coffee or tea lingers in the mouth and is not rinsed away, the tannic acid etches into the pits and grooves in the enamel of your teeth, and may produce a rough, stained surface. Over time this can lead to serious and unsightly discoloration of your teeth - and your smile.

A quick and simple solution is to rinse your mouth with water after your comforting cup. Or you could decide to look a little goofy and drink your chocolate latte with a straw, limiting the areas of your mouth the tannin hits. And you should visit us at least every three to six months for a thorough professional cleaning. If the discoloration persists, there are whitening techniques we can use to make your smile shine again.

- Dr. James Thomas
& Dr. Paul Chappel

Don't Let Your Plan Dictate Your Treatment

In our practice, we are committed to providing you and your family with the best possible dental care, including long-term preventive care. Many of you have an employer-assisted dental health plan to help offset the cost of your family's ongoing oral health care. Whether you have a specific condition that requires treatment, or are seeing us for your regular checkup, we'll develop a treatment plan specifically designed for your needs.

It's important to remember that you are a partner with us in your oral health, and that treatment and care decisions should be made together

By taking care of your dental health you are making a long-term investment in your own well-being, and that of your family

with us, based on your actual needs. A dental plan is a way of helping you cover the cost of dental care. However, your dental plan may not cover the full cost of the specific treatment you require. *A dental plan is not a treatment plan.*

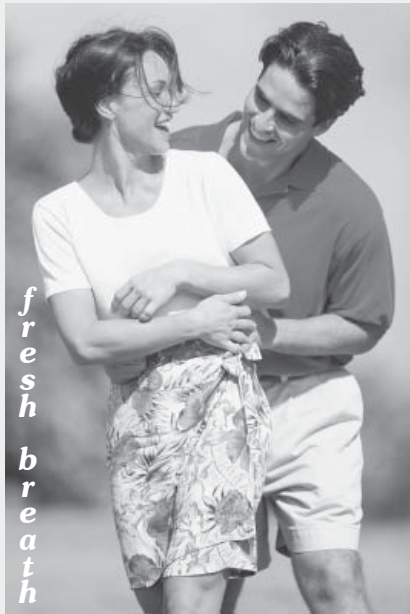


You should not allow your dental plan to dictate the care you receive. Some dental plans exclude necessary dental treatments such as sealants, adult orthodontics, specialist referrals, crowns and bridges, and other dental needs. Some plans will only provide the level of benefit allowed for the least expensive way to treat a dental need, regardless of the decision made by you and us as to the most effective and necessary treatment required.

By taking care of your dental health you are making a long-term investment in your own well-being, and that of your family. If we can be of any help to you in understanding your dental plan, and how it can function as a part of your treatment plan, please let us know.

We are committed to preventive dental care!

nutrition is linked to dental health



Yes!

Jungle mouth! Fish breath! What child hasn't heard and used these dreadful words? And what adult hasn't worried from time to time about their breath? The social stigma of bad breath is a major concern. Your breath is a very intimate part of you, yet you distribute it to your surroundings continually!

Recurrent bad breath is almost always caused by bacteria in the mouth. The bacteria releases foul-smelling noxious gases that combine with your natural breath with distressing results. What causes the bacteria? Just look in the mirror. Inadequate cleaning of your teeth, gums, and tongue leaves behind tiny traces of food debris which eventually produce the bacteria. There can be, however, other more serious causes of bad breath. Gum disease is often responsible. Sinus or lung infections, some forms of diabetes, and kidney or liver malfunctions can also be a cause.

Often we can't tell if we have bad breath. Here's one easy detection method: Lick your own wrist, wait a few seconds, then smell. Does your wrist have a bad odor?

If you exercise good oral hygiene and you still suffer from bad breath, don't be embarrassed. Talk to us! We can help through designing an oral hygiene program specifically for you!

We all know that sugar is not good for your teeth. Even back in ancient Greece, Aristotle concluded that people who ate sweet and sticky foods were more apt to develop tooth decay!

But sugar is not the only culprit. Overall nutrition has been proven to have a significant effect on your dental health.

Nutritious foods provide the basis for healthy teeth and gums, and provide you with the proper vitamins and minerals needed to fight the bacteria that causes tooth decay and gum disease.

The Food Pyramid

The best way to ensure you are eating smile-friendly foods is to follow the guidelines laid out in the Food Pyramid. It's simple: Each day, eat more of the foods listed at the bottom of the pyramid, and fewer of those listed at the top.

Bottom-level foods include grains found in bread, rice, cereal, and pasta (6-11 servings). Next are vegetables (3-5 servings) and fruits (2-4 servings). Then milk, cheese, and yogurt

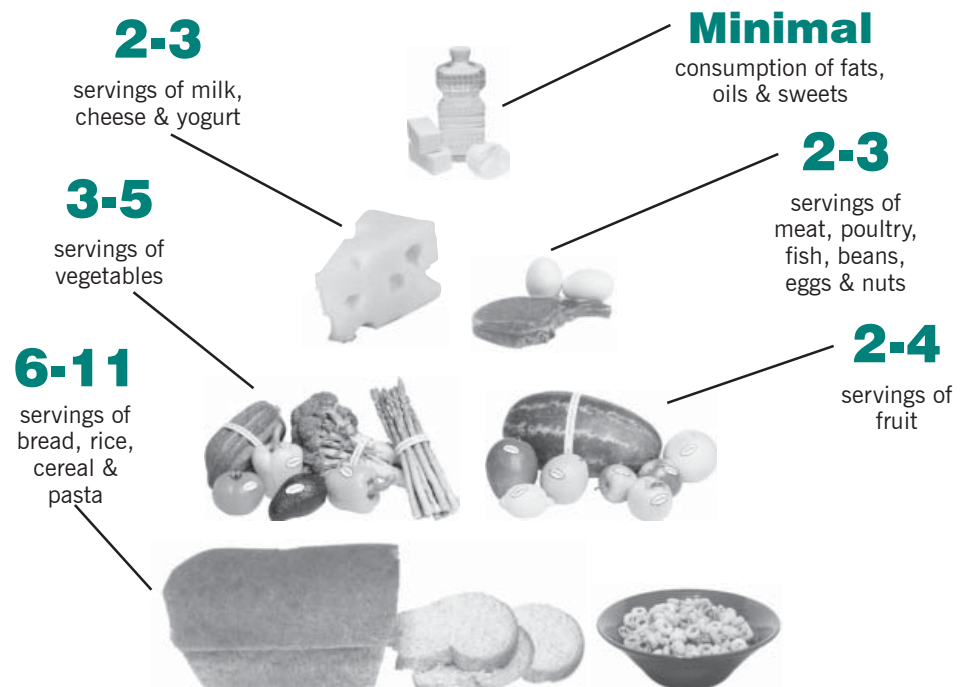
(2-3 servings), and meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, and nuts (2-3 servings). At the top of the pyramid are fats, oils, and sweets, which should be consumed sparingly.

Tooth decay is promoted by starchy foods such as breads, cereals, and crackers. When such foods break down in the mouth, they feed the bacteria that cause tooth decay. Potentially harmful sugars found in fruits, milk, ketchup, salad dressings, and some canned vegetables are also a factor.

Of course, you can't just stop eating these foods. But when you do eat them, make sure you brush and floss afterwards.

Smart Snacking

Snacks are a good way to make sure you get the recommended amounts of good-for-you foods - but some are better than others. When it comes to dental health, recommended snacks include hard-boiled eggs, milk, cheese, plain yogurt, raw veggies, plain popcorn, and nuts. Studies show cheese and peanuts may even help protect teeth against decay-causing acids.



The Fountain Of Youth!

All through the centuries people have longed for an elusive elixir that will turn back the clock for them and reverse the inevitable process of ageing. One sip and those wrinkles will slip away forever. Wouldn't it be nice if it were so easy?

From best sellers like "Age Erasers," to fast one-liners (at twenty, you're hot, at forty you're not, at sixty you're shot), our society sends out a strong message to both men and women that we should fight hard to slow down the inevitable signs of ageing. As well, we are more aware of the link between a healthy lifestyle and our appearance.

There are lots of ways to spend your money on trying to look younger: anti-wrinkle gels, cosmetics, skin treatments, plastic surgery, facials, spa treatments, and on and on. But we often overlook one of the simplest and most effective ways to shed a few years – just improve your



Cosmetic procedures can change an age-revealing smile into a more youthful smile.



smile. It's hard to overestimate how important our smiles are to the general impression we make. A smile that reveals discolored or cracked teeth, a receding gum line, or just a generally dull look has a subtle but profound effect on how old we look.

Most adults don't realize that as time passes, our smiles are not as bright as they used

to be. Coffee, tea, smoking, red wines, and certain antibiotics are all contributors to dull, stained teeth. Time and periodontal disease can shrink the underlying bone and gum tissue that hold our teeth in place, and this can add years to your appearance.

We're your smile experts, and we can help to improve all of these conditions. Whitening treatments, replacing existing silver restorations with white composite fillings, and porcelain veneers can all be part of your smile makeover. We can't promise the Fountain Of Youth, but a new and improved smile can be the next best thing. Come and see us soon for a smile analysis as a first step towards a bright and youthful appearance.



Dental Age Erasers

OPEN WIDE: Checking For Oral Cancer

According to reports, men aged 45 or over who use tobacco or alcohol are at a higher risk for oral cancer.

As the sixth most common cancer, oral cancer is responsible for about 3% of all cancer-caused deaths. About 75% of oral cancers can be linked to tobacco and excessive alcohol usage.

If not treated quickly, oral cancer can lead to chronic pain, facial disfigurement, and even death. Early

detection, especially by your dentist, is essential.

It is possible to reduce the likelihood of oral cancer. Don't use tobacco, don't drink alcohol excessively, but do eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, and visit our office once or twice a year and request an oral cancer checkup.

At home, check your mouth for symptoms including sores or ulcers that

bleed easily or do not heal, white or red patches or lumps that don't go away, and soreness, and note any difficulty chewing, swallowing, or speaking.

Since most lesions are painless, it's imperative that our staff regularly screen for oral cancer. We may find symptoms that you haven't noticed. And most importantly, early detection increases your chances for successful treatment.

More than 12 million North Americans suffer from diabetes, a chronic metabolic disease that is treated primarily by regulation of blood-sugar levels. We know now that there is a proven relationship between healthy gums and teeth, normal blood-sugar levels, and overall good health in diabetics. This interdependence challenges diabetics to pay serious attention to their oral health in general, and the health of their gums in particular.

Periodontitis, or gum disease, affects the soft gum tissues and the bone that holds our teeth in place. Diabetics, particularly those with chronic high blood-sugar levels, are especially vulnerable to bacterial and fungal infections, including the bacteria that causes gum disease. In addition, high blood-sugar levels also retard the healing of infections, and even accelerate gum disease because of the higher sugar content found in saliva.

Diabetics with chronic high blood-sugar levels can develop severe gum disease much more easily than those who manage to keep their levels in the normal range. Any of you who are diabetic to any degree should see us regularly to ensure any periodontal problems are dealt with as promptly as possible. This "classic vicious cycle," as one leading dental researcher put it, can be controlled, but it requires a regular program of vigorous oral health care, both in your home, and here in our office.

Have A Healthy, Happy Holiday!

The holiday season is upon us. Gift giving, family reunions, and the renewal of traditions both religious and cultural are all part of this special time.

Oh yes, and let's not forget food! Doesn't it seem as if the holiday meals never end – that one great spread just leads to another? *Spread's* the word, all right. And what about those of us who have more than one family to honor, or more than one tradition to uphold during the holiday period? It's certainly not fair to leave out anyone, or to let down any good, proud cooks.

The holidays present a real nutritional and health challenge for all of us, young and old alike. We certainly want to enjoy ourselves to the fullest, but we also really need to limit any damage to our overall health, including our dental health. Here are a



few simple tips to help your family ring in the new year happy and healthy.

- Make sure nutritious snacks of fresh vegetables and dip are always available along with the traditional holiday sweets. Always give an alternative for those who want a little break from the richness of holiday foods. Tangerines and other fresh

fruits are often a part of the holidays. These days, so many fruits are available from all over the world that a colorful and nutritious fruit assortment is easy to put together and can be a welcome alternative.

- Another wonderful, but overlooked health food is cold, fresh water, and lots and lots of it. Keeping your body well hydrated will really help digestion and recovery from long, calorie-rich meals.

- Make certain that regular exercise is a part of the holidays. And ensure that you pay special attention to your home dental care. Your teeth will need to be cleaned and flossed more often than usual, and your children will probably need more supervision and reminders.

So have a wonderful holiday – but give your health a little helping hand.

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Office Hours

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Chris, Susie, Heather, Amanda, Jamie ...
..... Clinical Assistants
Carol, Kim, Tanya Dental Hygienists

Brush • Floss • Smile

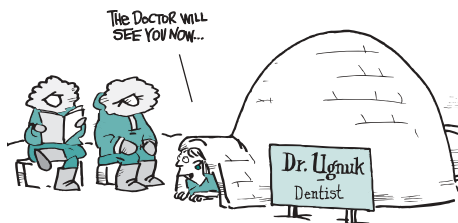


Sonicare™

The most important part of home dental care is regular tooth brushing, combined of course with daily flossing. Throughout the years we've seen many improvements to toothbrushes, manual and mechanical. But the new Sonicare™ is truly revolutionary!

The Sonicare brush head moves at 31,000 strokes per minute, which combined with gentle sonic waves, has been proven in laboratory studies to attack plaque beyond the reach of bristles alone. In fact, studies have shown that the Sonicare removes nearly twice as much plaque between teeth as a manual toothbrush, and can even reverse gingivitis and shrink periodontal pockets.

We think that the Sonicare toothbrush ranks with the very best methods of cleaning your teeth and your gums. Please come in anytime and ask us about Sonicare ... the toothbrush for the 21st century!



Tricking The Tooth Fairy

By Diane Hill, CDA

Excerpted from *Chicken Soup for the Dental Soul*

We started seeing Daniel when he was a three-year-old. In our practice, we've always encouraged parents to bring their children in starting at about that age so the youngsters begin their lifetime dental program with a "good" experience.

By the time Daniel was in the first grade, we discovered that a number of his baby teeth had to be extracted to make room for the adult teeth pushing up from below. (For most people, baby teeth simply loosen up and "fall out.") Each time we pulled one of Daniel's teeth, we'd pack it in a little plastic "tooth chest" so he could put it under his pillow. On each succeeding visit, we'd always ask if the Tooth Fairy had been good to him. Invariably, he'd say something like, "Oh yes, I got a dollar."

One day, Daniel came in for a routine checkup. We determined that no additional baby teeth needed pulling just then. It was at this point that Daniel confessed he had recently tried to trick the Tooth Fairy. The boy's new puppy had lost a tooth, so Daniel placed it under his pillow with the expectation of soon making another deposit in his piggy bank.

"When I looked under my pillow the next morning," Daniel told us, "all I found was a bone!"

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Reprinted by permission. *Chicken Soup for the Dental Soul* is available by phone at 1-800-247-6553.

