

BROADWAY STATION DENTAL CENTRE

BULLETIN

Produced for the Patients of Broadway Station Dental Centre

Winter 2003

Dental Insurance Benefits

Dental insurance is a highly complex area that creates confusion for many patients. The complexities of dental insurance and the lack of sufficient information provided by some insurance companies make it almost impossible for some patients to properly understand their benefits. If that isn't confusing enough, now you need to understand how to properly work with your dental insurance company to achieve the highest level of benefits to which you are entitled. The benefits that you will receive are based on the terms of the contract that were negotiated between your employer and the dental insurance company and not your dental office. The services selected are based on the cost of the policy to your employer and the negotiated arrangements with the dental insurance company. Many insurance companies try to control the amount of dentistry you receive by requiring authorization for procedures in advance. Dental insurance companies rarely cover 100 percent of any dental fee and, in many cases, cover less than 50 percent or nothing at all. While keeping in mind that we will do our best to help you collect your insurance benefit, patients need to understand that in the event your dental insurance refuses to pay for treatment, you are responsible for all fees.

Please let us know if you have any questions – it will be our pleasure to help you.

From The Dentists

Happy New Year to all of you, our friends, and their families. Hopefully you have had a happy and restful holiday season and are ready to embark on new and exciting experiences in this New Year. We would like to express a heartfelt thank you for your loyalty and friendship during the past year.

For us at *Broadway Station Dental Centre* 2003 is starting out to be full of activity with the promise of more to come. We would like to take this opportunity to formally welcome Dr. Mark Parhar to his new role as a partner in the practice. Dr. Parhar came to work with us in the mid nineties as a graduate from the University of British Columbia. He has taken on the role as resident endodontist – his passion – in this practice. As well, he is the dentist for the Vancouver Giants where his knowledge of sports dentistry and traumatic injuries is invaluable. Many of you have had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Parhar or have experienced his gentle demeanor in treatment. I am sure you will agree that we are very lucky to have someone with his experience on our management team.

We are also lucky to be able to welcome Dr. Anik Saintonge and her assistant Lori to our practice. Dr. Saintonge graduated from the University of Montreal and had her own practice in Fredericton, New Brunswick before coming to the West Coast. We are



delighted to work with her.

Another new development at Broadway Station is Sunday Openings. We realize that juggling hectic work schedules and family life leaves many of us running on a treadmill. For your convenience, as of March 1st, 2003 we will open on Sundays from 11:00 am - 5:00 pm.

We accept referrals! Ninety percent of our new patients are introduced to us by our existing patients. We would be honored to have you recommend our services to your friends and family. We think a referral is a wonderful compliment and your support means a lot to us.

Yours in good dental health,

Broadway Station Dental Centre

A healthy smile is always in style!

The Silent Disease

What is the number-one threat to your oral health? What is the number-one reason for early, unnecessary tooth loss? According to a recent national survey of dentists, periodontal (gum) disease easily wins the big prize. And what's worse, as the President of the American Dental Association recently put it, "It's entirely possible to have gum disease and not even know it... especially in the early stages. Perhaps this is why more than half of dentists surveyed also cite periodontal disease as the one area their patients are not sufficiently concerned about, despite the fact that there is growing evidence of links between the disease and other serious health conditions."

Gum disease will affect 75% of North American adults at some time in their lives. In its early stages when treatment is simplest and most effective, it can easily go unnoticed. This silent disease is caused by bacterial plaque, a sticky, colorless film that constantly forms on the teeth and gums. If the plaque isn't removed daily by brushing and flossing, it releases poisons which cause the breakdown of the fibers that hold your gums tightly to your teeth, which in turn creates pockets between your teeth and gums. These pockets then fill up with even more bacteria and toxins which further weaken the gum tissue and eventually

the bone. But until the disease reaches an advanced stage, it is often painless ... silent, but dangerous.

The earliest form of the disease is called gingivitis, which often affects teenagers. Two early symptoms are gums that bleed when brushed or flossed, and gums that are bright red and swollen instead of pink.

Periodontal disease can often be reversed, or at least kept effectively in check. But early diagnoses and a rigorous regimen of professional and home care are essential for success. Together we can win, so please make sure you have regular checkups and pay special attention to the state of your gums, even if you're symptom free.

How Do I Know?

Periodontal (gum) disease sneaks up on you. It can develop slowly, with few – if any – warning signs. Here are a few symptoms that will help you to identify the disease in its early stages.

Gums that bleed, even slightly, when you brush or floss your teeth.

Persistent bad breath, or a constant bad taste in your mouth.

Swollen or tender gums, or gums that appear redder than usual.

Gums that appear to have pulled away or are receding from your teeth.

Teeth that are loose, or seem to be changing position.



Healthy Gums: Healthy gums are firm and fill the spaces between teeth. They form a collar-like rim around the teeth and have little dot-like indentations called stippling. The stippled areas look like the skin of a navel orange. Healthy gums are odorless and do not bleed when you brush or eat.



Gingivitis: An early form of periodontal disease, gingivitis occurs when plaque forms and adheres to the tooth surface near the gums. Gums become inflamed, resulting in redness and puffiness, and they bleed when brushed or flossed. Bad breath is often present.

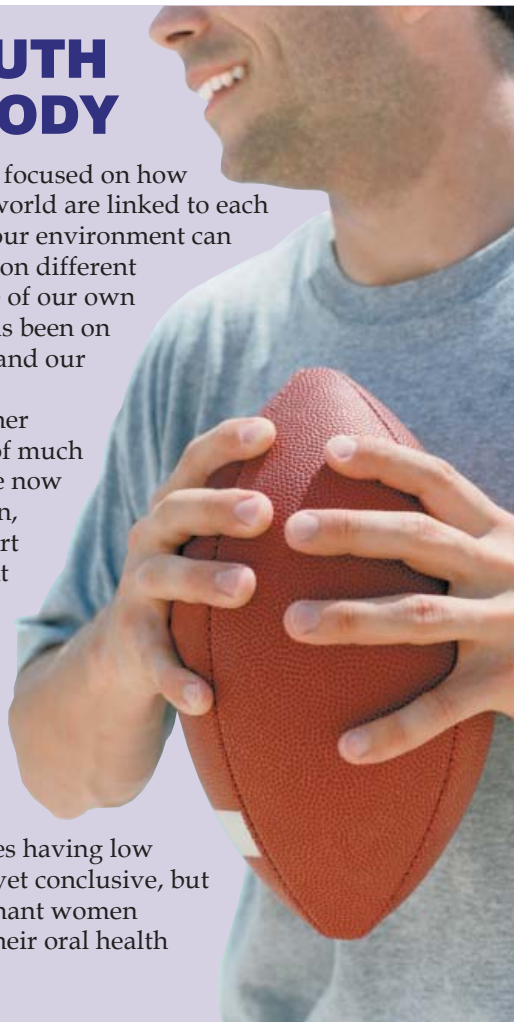


Periodontitis: When the infection spreads from the gum to the underlying bone, gingivitis becomes periodontitis. In this stage, the bone that supports the teeth is lost. Gums detach from the tooth forming pockets, allowing more bacterial activity. If left untreated, tooth loss can occur.

HEALTHY MOUTH = HEALTHY BODY

Scientific research has recently focused on how so many elements of our natural world are linked to each other; how change in one part of our environment can have a huge effect on other areas, on different plants or species. The same is true of our own bodies. A major scientific focus has been on the links between our oral health and our general health. The link between periodontal (gum) disease and other medical conditions is the subject of much research and debate. The evidence now strongly supports the link between, for example, gum disease and heart disease. Bacteria and toxins present in infected gums can enter the blood stream and travel throughout the body. The way this happens is not yet precisely known, although brushing or even chewing food may be the cause.

The bacteria produced by gum disease is also suspected to be a factor in pre-term births and babies having low birth weight. The evidence is not yet conclusive, but it's sufficient to suggest that pregnant women should take extra special care of their oral health throughout their pregnancy.



KICKING The Habit

We all know the devastating effects smoking or chewing tobacco has on our oral and general health. Quitting isn't easy, but the scientific evidence of just how profound and far-reaching the benefits are of a nicotine-free body continues to pile up.

Dentists have known for years that smoking is a serious contributor to periodontal (gum) disease which affects literally millions of North Americans. The heat and tobacco chemicals irritate sensitive tissue inside the mouth, killing cells, leading to chronic gum disease. And a recent study conducted at the State University of New York's School of Dentistry has concluded that smokers do not heal as well as non-smokers or ex-smokers following periodontal treatment.

The good news is that the effectiveness and recovery time of the treatment is improved significantly even if the patient has stopped smoking a short time before treatment.

Please give your gums a chance! Make your body a smoke-free zone, and it will thank you forever.

What You Can Do

Regular professional teeth cleaning by your dentist or hygienist is an essential part of gum disease prevention and treatment. But your periodontal health must begin with you, at your home and at your workplace. Here are some tips on what you can do to keep your gums healthy and disease-free.

> Floss your teeth carefully and thoroughly at least once a day.

> Regularly examine your mouth for signs of gum disease.

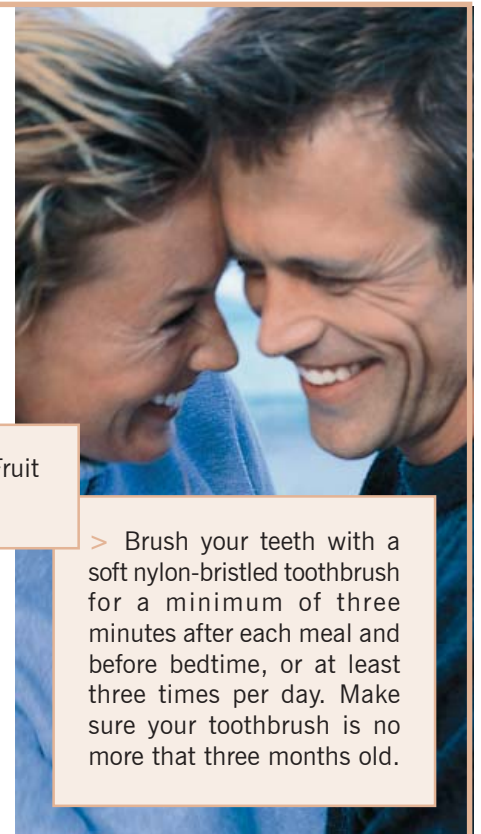
> If brushing is impossible after a meal, at least thoroughly rinse your mouth with warm water and chew a piece of sugarless gum.

> Avoid sweet, sticky snacks. Fruit and crunchy veggies are best!

> Eat well-balanced meals which include a variety of nutrients from all food groups.

> Avoid all tobacco products, and avoid excessive alcohol consumption.

> Brush your teeth with a soft nylon-bristled toothbrush for a minimum of three minutes after each meal and before bedtime, or at least three times per day. Make sure your toothbrush is no more than three months old.



Calcium: The Mighty Mineral

You've heard it from your mother, you've seen it on TV, and we're here to tell you it's true! If you want strong teeth and bones, and healthy gums, you need sufficient calcium every day, all your life. Regardless of your age, calcium provides many benefits.

Calcium is truly vital for growing children

Recent medical discoveries link the prevention of osteoporosis (a bone-weakening disease most common among senior adults) with a diet that includes regular calcium intake and daily exercise. But how much calcium do you need for a lifetime of healthy teeth and bones? Are you getting enough in your everyday meals or should you consider taking supplements?

The most effective amount for adults ranges from 800-1200 mg of calcium a day combined with a good exercise program. Vitamin D helps calcium absorption - especially important for caffeine drinkers because caffeine interferes with your body's ability to take in calcium.

Calcium is truly vital for growing children. We recommend 500 mg a day of calcium for kids up to 3 years of age; 600 mg for children aged 4-6; and 700 mg for those 7-9 years old.

Many things we eat and drink have calcium in them, with dairy products usually being your best source. Adults can get their recommended daily amount by drinking 3-4 glasses of milk, or an equivalent measure of yogurt or cheese (1½ ounces of cheese equals an eight-ounce glass of milk). You can also add milk or cream to



soups, sauces, and desserts. If you can't tolerate dairy foods, many products like orange juice are now fortified with calcium. Fresh vegetables such as broccoli and collard greens, and canned seafood like sardines and salmon, are also high in calcium.

If you're re-thinking your calcium requirements, we'd be happy to help you. Please give us a call.

OFFICE INFORMATION

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Office Hours

Monday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Tue/Wed/Thu 8:00 am - 7:00 pm

Friday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Saturday 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Sunday 11:00 am - 5:00 pm

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Early Detection

Oral cancer can be beaten

Oral cancer affects up to 40,000 North Americans each year, and almost 9,000 patients will die from it. In fact, the death toll from oral cancer is greater than that of cervical cancer or melanoma. In our practice we routinely include a complimentary oral cancer checkup with each general recall visit. Early detection means early treatment and, more importantly, a greatly increased chance of a successful outcome.

What can you do to protect yourself? Be sure to make an appointment with a dentist if you discover any of the following symptoms:

- a sore that bleeds easily or does not heal;
- a color, texture, or elasticity change in any oral tissue;
- pain, tenderness, swelling, or numbness anywhere in your mouth, tongue, lips, jaw, or neck;
- a lump, rough spot, crust, tissue thickening, or a small eroded area.

Some of these symptoms can be very difficult to see or notice in their early stages, so don't take chances!

Make sure you give a dental professional the opportunity to conduct an important full oral cancer examination on a regular basis.

Dental Implants

In the best of all possible worlds, our natural teeth should last - healthy and happy - for a lifetime. Unfortunately, most of us will in fact lose some of our teeth over the years. Periodontal disease, decay, unexpected trauma or fractures, or sometimes simple ageing will mean we have to seek alternatives to the real thing.

Until recently, tooth replacement meant a special fixed bridge or removable dentures. Now dental implant techniques can provide permanent, stable, attractive replacement teeth for your lifelong smile. Dental implants consist of three parts: an anchor which is implanted into your jawbone; a post which is used to attach the replacement tooth; and the replacement tooth itself.

Implants are an attractive and effective treatment choice for many patients. A significant time investment is required, however, and not all patients have sufficiently healthy gums or bone structure to support the implant. But scientific studies show that almost 90% of former denture wearers who switch to implants find their confidence and smile quota improves, and many of these patients declare that the change was absolutely worth it!

