

Dr. Thomas'

TOOTH TALK

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

Winter 2000/2001

FROM THE DENTISTS

Season's Greetings

With best wishes for your happiness in the new year

In the spirit of this festive season we would like to extend our sincerest thanks to all of our patients for making this year one of our very best. For a dental practice, it's the little things that count. We know that attention to detail can make a big difference in your dental visit. This is our opportunity to *thank you* for making the little things count.

You may not think much of it but your ongoing loyalty, cancellation notification, referrals and each and every kept appointment go a long way toward making this practice run smoothly and efficiently.

Of course the holiday season isn't just a time to look back. As we usher in the New Year we are also reminded that these are exciting times for the art and science of dentistry. We're looking forward to presenting you with new dental technologies and esthetic improvements. As always we'll keep you informed of the latest developments, in the pages of this newsletter. If anything catches your eye, or if it's time for a checkup, just give us a call ... we'd like to thank you in person!

Happy holidays!

*Dr. James Thomas
& Dr. Paul Chappel*

Whiteners Shine Up Your Smile

Do you avoid smiling?

Do you shy away from being photographed or avoid smiling because your teeth are stained or dark? You are not alone. The number-one esthetic concern among dental patients is discolored teeth.

Don't despair - help is available. Even if your teeth are severely stained from smoking, coffee, tea, or aging, we can safely and effectively lighten them. Although many dental whitening products are now available on store shelves they are generally ineffective. The best method of tooth whitening is under our office's supervision.

Tooth whitening involves the lightening of dental discoloration by the application of a whitening agent. Usually, we will suggest a dentist-supervised at-home whitening kit. The newer products are a vast improvement over some of the older techniques because they're safer and give more predictable results. That makes them very popular with dentists. Unlike the over-the-counter bleaching products which can actually cause damage to your teeth and gums, whitening under our supervision is much more controlled and effective.

During your first appointment we'll take an impression of your teeth to produce a thin whitening tray that's

**Dreaming Of A
White Christmas?**
Tooth Whitening Special
NOW \$199*
** Offer available until February 28th, 2001.
Gift certificates are also available
for family & friends.*

custom-made to fit over your teeth. Along with the tray, you'll receive the whitening materials and be given instructions on how to wear the appliance. Some whitening systems recommend wearing the tray for two to four hours a day, and require three to six weeks to complete. Others work while you sleep at night, and usually take 14 to 21 days to accomplish their magic.

Lightening normally lasts from six months to five years, depending on your personal habits such as smoking, drinking red wine or the amount of coffee or tea you consume. If required, we can safely and effectively re-whiten your teeth. Let us know if you're interested in tooth whitening. After a brief examination your treatments can begin, and within two weeks your smile will be clean, bright and white.



Cosmetic and whitening techniques will revive a dulled smile.

Visit our web site at www.hilltopdentistry.com

Smile!

It's just one of the ways to reduce stress

Stress is an unavoidable fact of life and although some stresses are actually helpful, too much stress can negatively impact your physical and mental health.

Recent research suggests that the inability to cope with stress increases your risk of periodontal disease by affecting the immune system. And although more research is needed to determine the exact mechanisms that cause tooth grinding (bruxism) and jaw clenching, it is believed that emotional factors may play a key role.

One of the main causes of stress is change. Personal loss, illness, and money problems, as well as lifestyle, job, and family changes all create tension which can result in anxiety and depression. If you have experienced any prolonged periods of anxiety such as nervousness or an inability to slow down or relax, chances are you may also be experiencing signs of depression.

To keep tensions within reasonable limits, start by avoiding alcohol, tobacco, caffeine, barbiturates, and tranquilizers which often simply mask or contribute to the problem.

Try some of these techniques to reduce **STRESS** in your daily life:

See your doctor for a physical to rule out any medical problems.

Talk it over with family or with a close friend.

Relax by taking frequent short breaks during the day.

Exercise regularly to help you work off steam.

Set limits and plan to avoid too many big changes at once.

Smile! A healthy dose of love and laughter is just what the doctor ordered!

Stress and its symptoms are very common but it is important to know that almost all of these mood disorders can be helped. If stress and its effects do get out of hand, prompt professional advice can keep minor problems from becoming major troubles.

Restoring The Health Of Your Teeth

Crowns and bridges

At some point in our adult lives, many of us will lose a tooth to injury, decay, or gum disease. When that happens, the forces at work in your mouth can be significantly altered.

Chewing force in the back shifts to the front or opposite side, and these teeth can flare out, causing unwanted spaces and changing the very structure of your smile.

Teeth adjacent to the missing tooth may drift out of position, creating a domino effect that can seriously alter the look of your face. When teeth are not replaced, wrinkles and lines can form causing premature and unnecessary aging.

We can restore and even improve a smile using a combination of crowns and bridges to support or even replace

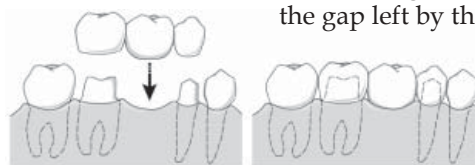
lost teeth. A crown is a restoration that covers or *caps* a tooth to protect it and restore it to its normal shape and size while strengthening and improving the appearance of your tooth.

A bridge is used to replace one or more missing teeth. The bridge spans the gap left by the missing tooth and

is usually anchored to the two existing teeth on either side of the gap. Bridges can be made of gold, porcelain-faced gold, or all porcelain

depending on structural requirements and where they'll show up in your smile.

If you're having a problem with one or more of your teeth, we'll help you decide which treatment is best to restore your teeth to their normal function.



Fixed bridges not only correct an altered bite, they also safeguard your appearance by preventing the collapse of facial features that can cause premature aging and wrinkles.

Brush With Greatness

The Chinese invented the first toothbrush a thousand years ago: it had an ivory handle and bristles made from a horse's mane. Toothbrush use was sporadic until the 19th century when it became popular among affluent English Victorians.

Today, in North America alone, the toothbrush industry is a ferociously competitive \$950 million market where a company might invest up to \$2 million alone in research and development for new products with flashy names like *Plaque Blaster*, *Gripper*, *Sensation*, *Crossaction*, and *Interdental*. Serious designers ponder the ergonomics of grip and angle. Children's toothbrushes are molded into toy-like objects mimicking the shape of familiar cartoon characters.

No evidence exists yet to show that any one type of toothbrush design is

better at removing plaque than another. What matters is that you brush, using correct technique, for at least three minutes, the *minimum* time necessary to reach all areas and dislodge cavity-causing bacteria. Which toothbrush is best? In general, the toothbrush head should be small for easy access. It should have a long, wide handle for a firm grip, and it should have *soft* nylon bristles with rounded ends so you won't hurt your gums.

Toothbrushes must be replaced regularly, before the bristles become splayed and frayed, or at least every three months. Old toothbrushes may also harbor harmful bacteria that can cause gum disease. You should change your toothbrush at the beginning of any illness and again after you feel better.

What is the most important tool for brushing your teeth? Your brain! Think about what you are doing. If you take a moment to connect your brain to your hand, you'll do a much better job.



the life and times of your teeth

Check out where you and your family are in the following categories



Zero to two:

Baby teeth arrive at around six to eight months. Get baby used to the toothbrush. Do not permit your child to fall asleep with her bottle in her mouth.



Two to five:

Full set of baby teeth arrives. First dental visit no later than third birthday. Try to correct thumb-sucking and blanket sucking habits.



Five to nine:

Permanent teeth arrive. First stage orthodontics may be necessary. Regular visits to our office should continue.



Nine to nineteen:

Adolescence! The muscles in your teen's mouth and jaw grow quickly to manage the work of 32 adult teeth throughout a lifetime. Orthodontic work may need to be completed. Cavity prevention and dental hygiene habits are a high priority, partly because this is likely to be the first time your child is away from home for more than a few days.



Twenty to thirty:

Wisdom teeth, potential dental troublemakers, make their presence felt and many end up being removed. Gingivitis (gum disease) may begin although you may not even know it. We can diagnose it and treat it easily in the early stages.



Thirty to forty:

Gingivitis often progresses to its advanced form, periodontitis, which affects the underlying bone and eventually leads to tooth loss. Early diagnosis and treatment at our office is essential.



Forty to fifty:

Restorations should be regularly checked and replaced if necessary. If your dental care and home care has not been ideal throughout your life, you may lose a tooth to periodontal disease, and root canal therapy may be needed to save adjacent teeth. Continuing attention to gum disease and increased dental hygiene is a must.



Fifty to sixty:

Crowns and bridges may be necessary to preserve your remaining teeth (and your smile!) for your senior years.



Sixty and beyond:

Most people over the age of sixty end up with some form of tooth root decay. Gum disease remains the number-one dental enemy. Researchers have discovered links between periodontal disease and heart disease and strokes. Regular dental care and oral checkups are just as important if you have dentures. But there is no reason that, with the combination of good home dental care and regular visits to our office, you can't keep your teeth for life.

TOOTH TRUTH

Drinking fluoridated water from birth has been shown to reduce tooth decay by as much as 50%. By the time your children reach age six, we should be working together on a strategy to prevent tooth decay that includes regular checkups, appropriate fluoride use, dental sealants, and proper brushing and flossing techniques.

A Parent's Guide To Dental Emergencies

Dental emergencies can be a distressing time for both parents and their children. It's been estimated that 14% of children will experience a dental emergency of some kind, so it's important to have a proper action plan prepared should an emergency happen. Here are some common emergencies and how you can handle them.

Toothache

The pain of a toothache can be sharp and piercing, or more generalized and throbbing. This pain usually occurs due to tooth decay. If your child develops a toothache, you should know that the pain will likely become worse instead of better. For temporary relief, hold a warm cloth against your child's cheek. If the area

around the tooth is swollen, you can also use a cool compress intermittently. Over-the-counter pain relievers like acetaminophen or ibuprofen also help. Caution: Don't place the pill directly on the painful tooth – swallow the medication with water.

Chipped Or Broken Tooth

This happens most commonly playing sports or during active play. The best way to manage tooth fractures is to prevent them. While participating in contact sports, cycling or in-line skating, your child should wear a professionally fitted mouthguard for protection. If a tooth does get chipped or broken, use warm water and try to rinse out as much dirt as possible. Apply a cold compress intermittently on the outside of the cheek to keep the swelling down.

Call our office immediately.

Knocked Out Tooth

First, remain calm and have your child bite on some gauze or a clean cloth to stop any bleeding. Gently rinse the tooth then remove the gauze and try to stick the tooth back in place. Hold it there while you rush your child to the dentist. If that's not possible, put the tooth in a container of milk (or water) and bring it and your child immediately to our dental office. If a permanent tooth is knocked out, it is essential that treatment is sought immediately, to ensure the best chance of saving the tooth.

In all dental emergencies it is essential that your child gets to our office as fast as possible. We can evaluate the extent of the injury and make necessary repairs quickly and safely.

OFFICE INFORMATION

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Office Hours

Monday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm
Tuesday 7:00 am – 5:00 pm
Wednesday 7:00 am – 5:00 pm
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Other hours available on request

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Office Staff

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

*Wishing everyone a safe,
healthy, and happy
holiday season*



New Patients Welcome

We pride ourselves on the high quality of service and care we provide. There's no better sign that we are serving you well than the number of new patients who walk through the door.

Referrals and word of mouth are our number-one source of new patients. When you give us a good reference, you have our thanks. We won't let you down. We look forward to providing top-flight dental services to your family, colleagues, and friends. A vibrant patient base helps our practice grow and expand so that we can continue to offer the very best in dental treatment.

*There's no higher
compliment for us than
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So, if you're wondering whether or not we accept new patients – the answer is YES. Not only do we accept them, we encourage them. There's no higher compliment for us than to be given the privilege of meeting and serving the needs of a new patient.

Chewing Gum Battles Demineralization

Today's dental researchers are constantly looking for ways to combat tooth decay. The enemy is *Streptococcus mutans*, an oral bacteria that feeds on sugars left in our mouths after eating, and attaches itself to our teeth as plaque that produces acids which demineralize tooth enamel. Chewing gum stimulates the production of saliva which is the body's best defense against this bacteria.

There's one type of gum that actually goes one step further – gum containing *Recaldent*TM*, a milk-derived ingredient that can actually assist in strengthening teeth. Enclosed is a package of *Trident Advantage*TM which contains Recaldent. It's the only gum product to do so.** Recaldent maintains essential minerals that are able to penetrate the enamel of the tooth and promote remineralization.

Chewing two pieces of this gum for twenty minutes after eating is a positive step towards good oral health, as long as regular brushing and flossing aren't forgotten!

* *Recaldent*TM is a trademark of Bonlac Foods Ltd. and is a milk-based ingredient.

** In addition to *Trident For Kids*TM. Both products contain milk protein and are lactose-free.

