

The Pearly Post Newsletter



Produced to improve your dental health and awareness

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fromthedentist

Season's Greetings

With thanks, too

As the year comes to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your loyalty over the past year. I speak for everyone in our practice in telling you how much we appreciate each and every one of you.



We enjoy your visits and sharing your news about family events and activities. It's important to me and to the staff that you enjoy those visits to our office too. Your oral health is our first priority and we are committed to providing a comfortable and friendly atmosphere so that you, our patients, enjoy a relaxed, positive experience.

As the busy holiday season approaches, I would like to extend sincere wishes from all of us for happy celebrations with your family.

Yours in good dental health,

Dr. Kevin P. Hickey



It Was Soooo Good!

Holiday giving for your oral health

The holiday season will shortly be upon us, and with it all those wonderful family get-togethers, terrific meals, parties, snacks, more terrific meals, and finally all those great leftovers... You get the picture. Unfortunately, so do your teeth and your gums! And if you're not careful, by the New Year you might just need a complete oral health makeover.

The problem isn't so much the individual holiday sweet or rich food. It's just the constant bombardment of sugars and starches in the mouth that combine to fuel the plaque-producing bacteria that attack your tooth enamel. Saliva, your natural bacteria cleanser, becomes overwhelmed, and the plaque takes up permanent residence.

Here are some helpful hints to get you through the holidays, so you can keep your healthy smile for a lifetime!

■ Rinse your mouth with water between snacks. Chewing sugarless gum will give your saliva a boost and wash away the sugars and starches.

■ Eat adequate amounts of green, orange, and yellow vegetables and fruits for their high vitamin A and D content. Citrus fruits, yogurt, and other dairy products also provide plaque-fighting vitamins and minerals.

■ Avoid constant sugary snacks and sipping sugar-filled sodas for long periods of time.



Have a wonderful time, give your oral health a helping hand by taking the occasional time out from all those temptations. And never ever forget to brush and floss after every meal.

We work to keep your smile!

Show What You Know

Choose all that apply!

The top offender in a major workplace survey was:

- a) Stealing someone's parking spot
- b) Office romances
- c) Bad breath

Bad breath is caused by which bacterial by-products?

- a) Volatile Organic Sulphur compounds that smell like rotten eggs
- b) Methyl Mercaptan which smells like cabbage or smelly socks
- c) Diamines with descriptive names like Cadaverine and Putrescine

You can't smell your own horrible breath because:

- a) You are too accustomed to it
- b) Humans turn off awareness of bad smells more quickly than good ones
- c) Nature wants to keep you conscious

The most effective breath freshener is:

- a) Brushing, flossing, and rinsing
- b) Breakfast to start saliva flow
- c) Breath mints

The best way to learn about bad breath prevention is through regular dental visits!

Answers: c, all, a&b, a&c



Your Smiling Future

Commit to your prenatal visits

Pregnancy can be experienced as an ocean of calm ... or as shifting waves of unpredictable emotions. The same hormonal fluctuations that contribute to these mood changes can also trigger oral health problems like periodontal (gum) disease. Because research has shown that periodontal bacteria can cross the placental barrier, periodontal evaluation and monitoring is a vital part of prenatal care for both mother and baby.

Here's why...

- Periodontal disease may be linked to pre-term delivery, low birth weight, and low weight for gestational age. The more advanced the periodontal disease, the greater the potential risk.
- Periodontal disease may be associated with an increased risk for toxemia, a condition characterized by an abrupt rise in blood pressure and the presence of toxins.
- Nearly half of women with gestational diabetes, a type of diabetes that occurs during pregnancy, also have periodontal disease.
- For diabetics, periodontal disease during pregnancy may affect blood sugar control, which in turn, increases periodontal risks.

In the earliest stages, gum disease has no symptoms. So please don't wait until you experience red, swollen, or bleeding gums that could indicate infection, or until you develop a bad taste in your mouth and/or bad breath. Protect yourself with regular dental care and thorough daily brushing and flossing, because gum disease may be linked to systemic diseases at every stage of life. If you're expecting, please include us in your regular doctor visits.

Restore Your Balance

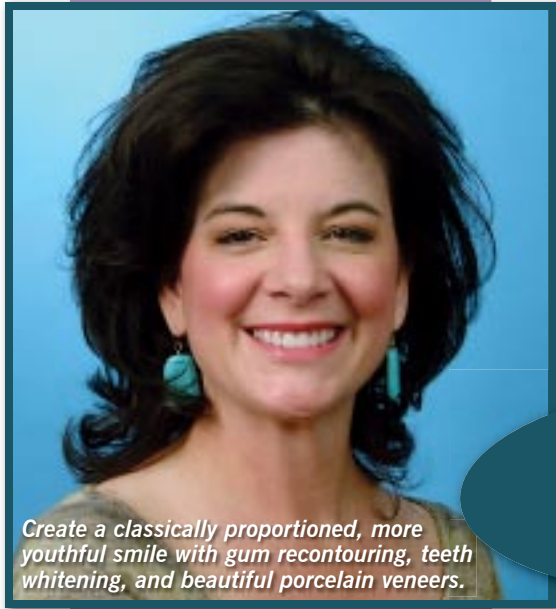
Try yoga!

The ancient Indian practice of yoga has been credited with curing just about everything, including the common cold. But improving your oral health? Yes! Studies show a reduction in blood pressure, heart rate, and stress. That's important for oral health, because...

- Stress diminishes resistance to infections including gum disease, and makes us susceptible to the discomfort of canker sores and dry mouth.
- Jaw joints that are strained with tension due to stress can become sore and cause headaches, teeth grinding can wear and crack your teeth, and biting inside your cheeks can be a real pain.

Of course, self-medicating anxiety with tobacco, alcohol, and other substances, and letting your oral hygiene slide, can throw your oral health out of balance too. Get your balance back. Take the pressure off with yoga instead!





Create a classically proportioned, more youthful smile with gum recontouring, teeth whitening, and beautiful porcelain veneers.

Don't Chance It!

Find out how to preserve your smile!

Is your scrupulously healthful lifestyle placing you at risk for an unattractive smile? You may associate receding gums, exposed roots, and yellowed teeth with chronological ageing, but they're often the cumulative result of environmental damage. Eating and drinking a lot of healthful but acidic fresh fruit and vegetable products can demineralize and stain your tooth enamel. And overzealously brushing your teeth can damage your gums *and* thin your enamel, revealing the yellow dentin underneath.

Here are some preventive and protective cosmetic procedures that you can choose to improve your smile ... for a lifetime.

Dentist-Supervised Teeth Whitening - **Prevent damage** to your gums and tooth enamel from abrasive whitening toothpastes and remove the risk of over-the-counter whitening products. We can design and supervise a whitening program for you to **lighten** stained, discolored, or dull teeth.

Enamel-Colored Restorations - **Strengthen, brighten, and protect** your teeth and make your smile look healthier and more youthful with natural-looking **white fillings** and **bonding** materials, **porcelain** or **resin crowns**, or translucent, custom-designed **porcelain veneers**. **Avoid** drifting teeth and a misaligned bite with **bridges** and **implants** to replace one or more missing teeth.

You're doing it all and you're doing it all right. An active life, a healthful diet, and disciplined home care routines are the routes to excellent oral and overall health. But sometimes just a little bit of the right kind of knowledge can give you a *lot* more power.

Let dentistry help you look your best!

Can you guess which tooth is an **IMPLANT**?



A Smart Investment

Dental implants: bank on a beautiful restoration

IMPLANT FACTS

- Biocompatible so bone cells grow on the implant root
- Bacterial-resistant
- Minimally invasive procedure
- Predictably high success rate whether replacing one tooth or many

HEALTH BENEFITS

- Stops or prevents jawbone loss & drifting of adjacent teeth
- Crown of implant can't ever decay and gum-damaging plaque buildup is inhibited
- No adjacent teeth involved to secure a restoration
- Ability to eat unlimited nutritious food choices

APPEARANCE BENEFITS

- Ensures a more youthful appearance by avoiding sunken jaws or misaligned bite
- Whiter, brighter smile and youthful, pink, healthy gums
- Immediate superior cosmetic results
- Maximizes options for healthy teeth and gums and overall appearance

Which tooth is the implant? The upper right central incisor.

Mercury & Moms-To-Be

FDA concerned about silver fillings

For several years, pregnant women have been cautioned about the dangers of eating fish with high levels of mercury. Mercury readily passes the placental barrier and concentrates in the red blood cells of the fetus. At birth, infants are also susceptible to mercury exposure through breast milk.

Now the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is concerned about mercury found in amalgam (silver-colored) dental fillings, saying the mercury may have neurotoxic effects on the nervous systems of developing children and fetuses. While the American Dental Association (ADA) believes amalgam fillings remain safe for patients based on many government studies and scientific reviews, the FDA is conducting a review of mercury contained in fillings, to be completed by mid-year 2009.

When amalgams are placed in or removed from teeth, they release

mercury vapor; mercury vapor is also released through chewing. If you're interested in exploring the alternatives to dental amalgams, we'd be pleased to talk with you about composite fillings that resemble the natural tooth color.

Until the FDA report is completed, we encourage all of our pregnant patients to continue to see us and discuss options with us. Remember that dental care is particularly important during pregnancy because gingivitis and other oral health problems may be linked to pregnancy complications. We'll keep you posted as information is available.

And in the meanwhile, if you are expecting, be sure to get lots of sleep now... Life will soon be a little different!



officeinformation

Kevin P. Hickey, DDS
8108 Cazenovia Road
7 Pines Office Park
Manlius, NY 13104-9780

Office Hours

Monday 12:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Tuesday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm
Wednesday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm
Thursday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Contact Information

Office (315) 682-8921
Fax (315) 682-5561
Emergency (315) 436-2745
Web site www.manliustoothdoc.com
Email manliustoothdoc@aol.com

Office Staff

Cindy.....Dental Assistant
Debbie.....Office Manager
Lynda.....Hygienist
Brighton.....Therapy Dog



It's All About Time

Thank you for understanding

Your appointment times are reserved specifically for you and our operatories are set up to meet your unique requirements. We'd like to let you know what a last-minute cancellation or a "no show" means to us all as these are the two greatest sources of stress and expense in running our dental practice.

It takes hours to realign our timetable, but more importantly, there is usually insufficient time to schedule other patient(s) who could really benefit from the now-available appointment. Plus, unkept appointments can adversely affect your health, either by delaying necessary treatment or interrupting a series of treatments which jeopardizes the ultimate outcome.

Please keep your appointments. If you absolutely cannot, then please give us as much notice as possible. Thank you!

Play Safe!

Just wear it!

Did you realize that one-third of dental injuries are related to sports activities? Wearing a mouthguard makes *absolute* sense in sports such as hockey – we're sure you know that – but it can also provide protection in snowboarding and skiing.

It's imperative that the mouthguard fits well and does not impair breathing. Be on the lookout for telltale signs of wear, which means decreased effectiveness: tears or holes, or loss of shape due to chewing. Kids need theirs replaced yearly, sometimes more often, as their dentition changes.

Store your mouthguard in its container and clean it after use with a toothbrush, cool water, and toothpaste, or drop it in a glass for 15 minutes with a fizzy-tablet denture cleaner. Bring it to every appointment so that we can insure your protection is first rate!