

Dental Care Information

Tips for Healthy Teeth



& Preventative Care



for a healthy
& beautiful

Smile

Provided by □ Dr. Douglas Harman DDS

This brochure contains basic information and facts about dentistry...

...understanding how to manage your oral health prevents extensive dental work.

What's in this brochure?

This brochure contains basic information and facts about dental care, helping you to make knowledgeable decisions about managing your oral health and maintaining a healthy beautiful smile!

This brochure has been written in a plain format so that information will be easy to read and understand.

Why is this information important?

Regular dental check-ups are important for avoiding problems related to your oral health, but knowing and understanding the basics of how to manage your oral health prevents extensive dental work.

Most of us only turn to our dentist when we have a problem, but we should be partners with our dentist in preventing dental problems. We can do this by remaining informed.

This simple guide will point out just a few things about taking care of your teeth and explain why it is important to maintain a regular dental program.

Tooth brushing

The practice of brushing is important because it prevents the build up of dental plaque.

Plaque is the tiny filmy white coating that accumulates daily on the teeth.

Plaque causes the two most common diseases found in the mouth, dental decay and gum disease.

The longer dental plaque is permitted to stick to the teeth, the greater the risk of dental disease.

- Brush your teeth thoroughly at least twice a day to remove plaque.
- Use a soft toothbrush.
- To help eliminate bad breath, brush the top surface of your tongue.

What are the different methods for brushing teeth?

Dr. Harman recommends two methods for brushing teeth.

They both utilize the same angled position of the tooth brush on the teeth:

Place your brush at a 45-degree angle towards the intersection of the tooth and the gum. This is the arrangement for brushing the sides of the teeth.

- One suggested technique is to brush gently in a circular motion.
- Another technique is known as the gentle scrub:
 - The brush is moved backwards and forwards horizontally in very short strokes.
 - Brush all the tooth surfaces of all the teeth.
 - Brush behind the front teeth with an up and down movement using the end of the brush.
 - Brushing should be unhurried and thorough.

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Floss your teeth the same time you brush your teeth...

Dr. Harman will be happy to show you how to floss...

Flossing

Dental floss is the best way to clean the tooth surfaces between the teeth.

As with brushing, flossing is critical and will also assist in controlling plaque formation.

- Floss your teeth the same time you brush, at least twice a day. After breakfast and before bedtime.
- Different types of floss are available, such as regular floss and dental tape.

Here are a few tips for flossing...

- Use a 12-18 inch length of floss.
- Wrap the floss around your middle fingers.
- Hold the floss between the thumb and forefinger of each hand.
- Leave about 2 inches (5cm) of floss between the hands. The floss must be taut when it is used.
- Gently guide the floss across the contact point between the teeth.
- When the floss is in position between the teeth, curve it tightly against one tooth surface and rub it up and down a few times.
- Each stroke should be from just under the gum to the contact point between the teeth.
- Repeat this for each tooth surface between all the teeth.

Use a floss holder if you have difficulty using the conventional floss.

Also, be careful not to cut your gums with the floss. A sharp downward thrust of the floss will damage the gum and make it bleed.

Dr. Harman will be happy to show you how to floss, and choose which floss is best for you.

Plaque is the major cause of periodontal or gum disease...

If plaque is not removed it will cause the gum to bleed...a condition known as gingivitis.

A professional dental cleaning is the only way to remove tartar...

“Periodontal” or Gum Disease

What does “periodontal” mean?

Periodontal means "surrounding the teeth". Peri means around or surrounding, while dental refers to teeth. The tissues surrounding the teeth are called periodontal tissues. The periodontal tissues include:

- The gums (also called gingiva). Your gums consist of soft pink tissue.
- The gum line is where the tooth meets the gum.
- Periodontal Membrane. This connects and attaches the roots of teeth to the bone.

What causes periodontal disease?

Dental plaque on teeth is the major cause of gingivitis (see below) and periodontitis.

If plaque is not removed, it will cause the gums to bleed. This is a condition known as gingivitis. Plaque that is not removed can develop into tartar.

As the plaque and tartar build up, the gum and bone anchoring the teeth in the jaw will be ruined. This is an irreversible condition and eventually the tooth or teeth in the affected area will need to be removed.

How can I tell if I have gingivitis or periodontitis?

These are some important things to watch for:

- Bleeding gums, or blood on your toothbrush.
- Bad breath.
- Teeth that are discolored by plaque or tartar.
- Receding gums, making the teeth look longer

Can periodontal disease be prevented?

Regular dental check-ups and cleanings, along with regular daily removal of plaque can prevent this disease from occurring.

Tooth Decay

Tooth decay (cavities) can develop on any surface of any tooth area.

Cavities will grow and are much easier to treat in a less expensive manner when they are caught early and treated small.

Even though your cavities may cause you no discomfort, your teeth are still decaying.

What causes tooth decay?

Tooth decay is caused by the bacteria found in the dental plaque.

This bacteria feeds on dietary sugars and release acids, which dissolve and destroy the teeth.

What are some symptoms of tooth decay?

The symptoms of tooth decay can vary according to the extent to which it has spread into the tooth area.

When decay has spread, pain can be caused by sweet foods, such as chocolate, sugary snacks and drinks.

Also, when the decay spreads deeper, sensitivity can be felt with hot and cold drinks.

Severe ongoing pain that is caused by hot food and drinks indicates that the nerves and blood vessels have become affected by the decay.

What can I do to prevent tooth decay?

Tooth decay can be prevented by regular home care and daily oral hygiene, including professional care and also dietary (sugar intake) control.

When tooth decay has occurred the tooth will be treated by cleaning out the cavity and placing a restoration (or filling) into the tooth.

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Tooth decay can be prevented by regular home and professional care...

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“Restorations” or Fillings

What is a dental “Restoration”?

A dental restoration is also known as a filling.

It is the repair of a damaged or decayed tooth, restoring it back to its normal shape, appearance and function.

Not all dental restorations are the same. Generally the name of the material that is used to repair a tooth is often the name given to the repair process.

Why should I restore a damaged or decayed tooth ?

A tooth is repaired to protect the part of the tooth that has become exposed by decay or damage.

Restoration can prevent the loss of a tooth, since decay may spread and destroy the tooth.

Restoration also permits normal eating and chewing.

Anxiety and Fears

In the past going to the dentist was a painful experience, and one which people feared.

Procedures were often painful and even the sound of the drill would upset people as well.

Today, dental equipment and procedures are far more sophisticated.

Dental procedures are now mainly painless. However, in spite of these technological and procedural improvements, people may still experience anxiety and about visiting the dentist.

This can lead to avoidance of dental problems and cause even more pain than the patient is trying to evade.

Please call and talk with someone in our office if you have any fears or anxieties regarding your dental needs. We will be glad to discuss and answer and issues to elevate your worries.

...avoidance of dental problems can cause more pain than what you may be trying evade.

Always putting
our patients
first...every
time.

About Us

We offer a host of procedures designed to give you the smile of your dreams, including whitening, veneers, crowns, and bridges, to name a few. So whether you are seeking a general dentistry or a subtle enhancement, we have the solution for you!

Our entire staff believes in a patient-centered approach to dentistry. We are team-oriented and do our best to offer each patient not only the highest quality dentistry, but also the friendliest service.

We welcome patients of all ages and who need all levels of care.

Contact Us

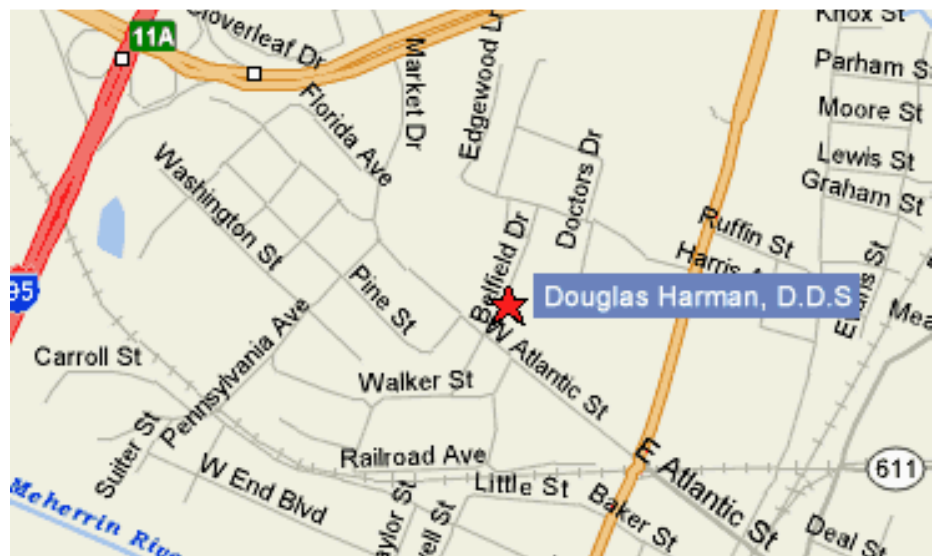
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