



# Dental Health News®

*Compliments of Joseph A. DeLapa, D.D.S.*

## News From the Office of:



**Dr. Joseph A. DeLapa**

Welcome to the latest issue of our newsletter. We're pleased to have this opportunity to say "hello" and bring you tips for making the most of your smile! Test your dental knowledge with our page 2 article, "Tooth Truths and Myths," and take a few minutes to browse through the rest of our newsletter for more interesting dental news.

As always, we'd like to remind you of the importance of maintaining regular appointments to preserve your optimum oral health. When you call to schedule your continuing care appointment, remember to ask us about the latest, most effective ways to whiten and brighten your smile.

Enjoy this newsletter, and please pass it on to a friend or family member who may be interested in reading up on the latest dental health news too.

All the best,

*Joseph A. DeLapa, D.D.S.*

Dr. Joseph A. DeLapa

## A BRIGHT NEW BEGINNING!



**Spring brings about a natural rebirth in nature, and often in our outlook as well, as we hail the arrival of better weather and look forward to exciting plans for the coming months. If you have an important event coming up – a wedding, for example – please talk to us now about ways to prepare your smile with that extra-special glow!**

Whether you're a bride who wants to ensure that her smile complements her beautiful white dress, or a guest who needs a photo-ready smile for a wedding or other important social event, you'll want to make sure that your bright, healthy smile reflects the happy occasion. Are any of these common dental issues standing between you and your perfect smile?

### **Yellow, discolored teeth.**

This common complaint is one of the easiest to solve. Ask us about our take-home whitening kits and other options for teeth that don't respond to regular whitening techniques.

### **Teeth that are too small, or gaps in-between teeth.**

Your teeth may be too small for the space allotted, resulting in gaps between your teeth —

most noticeably the top front teeth. Depending on the degree of space between the teeth, we can close the gaps using crowns, veneers, bonding or orthodontics.

### **Chipped, worn teeth.**

Teeth can't repair themselves. In fact, once the enamel on your teeth has been compromised, there is a high possibility you'll experience more breakage on the affected teeth. Allow us to present options to protect and correct compromised teeth.

### **Missing one or more teeth.**

A beautiful smile is a complete smile. Ask us about the latest options to replace any missing teeth, including natural-looking, permanent dental implants.

Put a spring in your step with a brighter, healthier, and more beautiful smile!

# TOOTH TRUTHS AND MYTHS

While most people don't spend a lot of time entertaining deep thoughts about dentistry, there are some basic dental beliefs that you may take as fact, which are, in fact, fiction. Here's a sample of some commonly believed dental notions.



- **“Cavities are for kids”:**

With greater education, early preventative care and the help of sealants and fluoride, the incidence of childhood caries has dropped over the past couple of decades. As the population ages, however, dentists are seeing an increase in cavities at the other end of the spectrum – within the senior population.

One cause of cavities is a lack of saliva in the mouth. When people get older, they tend to be prescribed a wide variety of medications, many of which dry out the mouth. Saliva is vital in fighting acidity and tooth decay as it provides a continuous system of flushing food particles off teeth and washing away the bacteria that can initiate decay. Commonly used drugs such as antidepressants, diuretics, antihistamines and sedatives can reduce saliva production and therefore increase the risk of tooth decay.

Root decay is also common in seniors. Being “long in the tooth” means that as gums shrink, tooth roots – which are not protected by enamel and are therefore more vulnerable to decay – are exposed. Ongoing dental attention is especially important at this point.

- **“You can feel when you develop a cavity”:**

Mild tooth decay doesn't cause any immediate discomfort, so unless your dentist spots the decay during your regular checkup, you may not be aware it's there. Unfortunately, by the time you actually feel a problem in your tooth, the damage has already progressed, and is affecting the nerve of the tooth. If the damage is not addressed at that point, it can progress further from a cavity that needs a filling, to a tooth that may require a root canal and/or an expensive crown restoration.

- **“Sweet treats are the most damaging foods for your teeth”:**

There's no doubt that sugary foods – especially sticky, sweet treats like gummies and hard candies that are held in the mouth for extended periods of time – are detrimental to dental health.

That being said, acids – from acidic foods such as lemons, citrus juices or soft drinks – also put your teeth at risk. The acids can cause erosion of the tooth-protecting enamel. Once the enamel thins, its protective element is reduced and the underlying dentin is vulnerable to decay.

- **“Losing a baby tooth prematurely is no big deal”:**

Those little “baby” teeth are actually a big deal – more so than most people realize. Because they fall out anyway, many parents wouldn't be overly concerned if a primary tooth was knocked out accidentally, or lost due to dental decay. However, these little teeth do serve a big purpose.

If a baby tooth is lost prematurely, the replacing permanent tooth could erupt malpositioned, and may require orthodontic treatment. Similarly, baby teeth that experience decay can result in damage later on – to the crowns of the permanent teeth developing under them. And finally, be aware that each baby tooth holds an important role in ensuring other teeth don't shift, and affect the space for upcoming permanent teeth. For these reasons, parents need to be just as vigilant with their baby's dental care as they are with their own.

There are many other dental myths and misconceptions that we would be happy to clarify for you. Please call us for the most up-to-date “tooth truths” today!

# FACING UP TO PAIN

Headaches and pain in and around the face can sometimes be traced to reasons ranging from stress – which may manifest itself with a clenching of the jaw or grinding of the teeth – to a cracked or diseased tooth, temporomandibular problems, nerve disorders or muscle spasms. Other, serious causes of facial pain could stem from tumors in the jawbone area, oral cancer or referred pain from cardiac disease. While those are just some sources, did you also know that head and facial pain might even be an effect of misaligned or missing teeth?



Having a full set of teeth, and having those teeth properly aligned, is more important than most people recognize. If you have head or face pain, consider this: the Academy of General Dentistry estimates the average person swallows 2,000 times per day. Swallowing causes the upper and lower teeth to come together and push against the skull. People who have a poorly aligned bite or missing teeth can find themselves with frequent headaches or sleep disorders, since their jaw muscles must work harder to

bring the teeth together, straining the surrounding jaw muscles. The result is pain in the ears, eyes, sinuses, cheeks or side of the head, or even a clicking in the jaw.

Please call us today to discuss whatever discomfort you may be experiencing in your head, mouth or anywhere in your face. We will check your mouth, teeth and your bite to see if it's a dental problem, or if it is an issue best referred to your family doctor or a specialist.



## BRUSH WHERE YOU FLUSH? READ THIS!

**In most bathrooms, the toilet is close to the sink – and where your toothbrush most likely resides. While you've probably never thought of it, every time you flush, polluted water vapor erupts out of the toilet bowl and settles on nearby surfaces, which may include your toothbrush! Next time, take a second to lower the toilet lid before you flush, to help contain those germs.**

Germs can travel from one toothbrush to another simply by sitting together in a common toothbrush holder. Being in close vicinity to other toothbrushes allows airborne bacteria to travel from toothbrush to toothbrush, opening up the possibility of infections such as periodontal (gum) disease and even the common cold being passed from one person to another.

When you brush, the plaque, bacteria and oral debris on your teeth are captured on your toothbrush. If you've recently recovered from a cold or the flu, remember

to replace your toothbrush or toothbrush head when you recover to avoid reintroducing germs back into your mouth.

Need recommendations on the best type of toothbrush for your individual needs? Have questions on toothbrush hygiene? Want to know how to ensure the cleanest, freshest mouth? Please don't hesitate to ask us!



# TRUE OR FALSE?



We've all seen examples of "false" teeth that stand out simply because of the sheer incompatibility of the teeth with their owner. Luckily, today's dental implant technology has solved both the visual and the functional issues of tooth replacement, allowing for new teeth that feel, function and look like the real thing!

A dental implant involves the installation of an artificial tooth root that is placed where the missing tooth was. A new tooth is then manufactured to attach to this "anchor," resulting in the beauty, convenience and permanence of a natural tooth.

Dental implants provide an excellent option for those who want a permanent replacement tooth

that looks and acts like the original tooth. Because the implant fuses to your jawbone, it offers not only a secure base for your new tooth, but also a look and feel that is as close as you can get to that of your natural tooth.

If you're looking for a "true" tooth replacement option, please call us to ask if you may be a suitable candidate for dental implants.

## SHARE A SMILE WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY!

Referrals and word-of-mouth recommendations are our number one source of new patients. In fact, one of the best compliments we can receive from our clients is the referral of one of your friends, colleagues or family members, AND when you refer a new patient to our office, you will receive a \$50 credit to your account!

Our extensive dental training and experience allows us to understand and provide a wide range of smile solutions. We believe in creating the smile our patients are looking for using progressive dental techniques and technology.

In addition, we can provide a variety of expert cosmetic solutions, from simple at-home whitening procedures to attractive veneers to complete smile makeovers. Our goal is to put bright, healthy smiles on our patients' faces!

**Thank you for your confidence in our services, and for sending your friends, family and colleagues our way!**

### Joseph A. DeLapa, D.D.S.



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#### Our Services Include:

- Cosmetic & General Dentistry
- Bonding & Veneers • Crowns & Bridges
- Tooth Whitening • Emergency Dental Care
- Root Canals • Oral Surgery • Extractions
- Dental Implants • Complete & Partial Dentures
- Invisalign® & ClearCorrect™ Orthodontics
- Botox® • Juvéderm® Enhancements

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