

News From the Office of:



Dr. Joseph A. DeLapa

The sleepy days of summer are but a distant memory now, as fall activities start competing for space on our calendars. If fall also includes a new sports season for the athletes in your household, don't forget to have them fitted for custom-made, dentist-issued mouthguards, which can protect not only their teeth, but may also help minimize the possibility of concussions.

Looking ahead to fall events and the beginning of the holiday season, you may want to ask us about teeth whitening or other smile improvements to prepare you for any upcoming social events.

And as the year marches on, please also remember that many insurance companies calculate dental benefits based on a calendar year. If you have dental benefits to use up by year-end, be sure to call us now to book an appointment. Calling early will ensure you get the appointment day and time that works best with your schedule.

We look forward to seeing you again soon!

All the best,

Joseph A. DeLapa, D.D.S.

Dr. Joseph A. DeLapa

WHAT'S IN A SMILE?

While a smile can communicate a person's mood, the components of that smile can also subconsciously convey so much more.



The condition of teeth – the size, shape, color and general healthy or unhealthy image they reflect – can immediately influence a first impression. In fact, studies have shown that virtually all adults surveyed believe a smile is an important social asset, and agree that an attractive smile makes a person more appealing to members of the opposite sex. On a professional level, most adults feel an unattractive smile could hurt a person's chance for career success.

A bright smile is viewed as a healthy smile, while the level of teeth whiteness can affect the perception of age. This is because our "baby" teeth are typically very white, and as we age, our permanent teeth often become darker, more yellow or stained. People have come to recognize that by whitening their teeth, they can turn back the clock on their perceived age!

Before committing to a tooth whitening program, it's impor-

tant to first ascertain WHY your teeth are discolored. While teeth do tend to darken as we age, tooth discoloration is also linked to genetics, antibiotics, tobacco use and staining foods. High levels of fluoride, tooth decay, root canal issues and trauma to a tooth can also affect tooth color. The success of your tooth whitening program is directly linked to determining if the tooth discoloration is intrinsic – issues stemming from the inside of the tooth – or extrinsic – external staining.

It's important to know that not all kinds of staining can be reversed with whitening products. In some cases – especially when intrinsic staining is identified – dental veneers may be your best resolution.

We'd be happy to help you determine the most successful whitening solution for your situation. Please call for a no-obligation consultation today!

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ONCE IT CRACKS, CAN YOU GO BACK?

As hard as teeth are, they're not invincible. A tooth may crack due to reasons as diverse as a one-time incident like a blow to the mouth during a contact sport or biting down hard on an un-popped popcorn kernel, to the result of a long-time habit such as clenching or grinding your teeth while you sleep. A cracked tooth doesn't "get better" all by itself, and will, sooner or later, require a visit to your dental office.

To understand the treatment your dentist may recommend to fix a cracked or broken tooth, it's important to understand the structure of a tooth.

The visible part of the tooth is called the crown, which is comprised of enamel – the hard outer layer of the crown. This covers the dentin, the layer directly under the white enamel.

Inside the dentin you'll find the pulp, which is soft tissue containing the blood and nerve supply to the tooth, and cementum, the layer of bone-like tissue covering the surface of the root. There are thousands of fibers, called periodontal ligaments, which fasten the cementum to the bony socket, anchoring the tooth to the jawbone and also acting as shock absorbers for the tooth.

When the hard outer layers of the tooth crack, any biting pressure will cause the pieces to open and constrict quickly, irritating the pulp and causing a jolt of pain. Continued biting pressure over time will eventually lead to pulp that is damaged beyond the point of self-repair, and sensitive to not only biting pressure but also temperature extremes. If not treated, extensive cracks can lead to an infection of the pulp tissue, which can spread to the bone and gum tissues surrounding the tooth.

It's often difficult to diagnose a cracked tooth as the pain may be sporadic – an occasional sharp, shooting pain from biting down on something, for example, or pain when your tooth is exposed to hot or cold

elements. In addition, you may be convinced the pain is coming from one part of your mouth, when in fact the problem is somewhere completely different. That's because the sensation of pain can "travel," from the top to bottom or bottom to top of the same side of the jaw. Pain doesn't typically travel across the middle of the mouth from the one side to the other.

Unlike a broken bone, a cracked tooth never heals naturally. Once we identify the cracked tooth, we'll recommend a treatment – usually a crown, root canal, or both – that will allow you to eat in comfort without the fear of the sharp jolt of pain that characterizes a cracked tooth.



HOW CAN I PREVENT MY TEETH FROM CRACKING?

Even with the most careful planning, you may end up cracking a tooth at some point in your life. But there are certainly steps you can take to minimize your risk.

- Don't make a habit of chewing on ice, hard candy, nuts, unpopped popcorn kernels, or even the ends of pens.
- Don't use your teeth as tools (to tear open packages, remove bottle caps, etc.).

- Wear a protective sports mouthguard or mask when participating in sports.
- Wear a retainer or dentist-issued nightguard if you clench or grind your teeth when you sleep.
- Practice good dental hygiene at home, and maintain regular dental visits to monitor your dental health and address any decay or problem areas before they intensify.



YOUR DIRECT LINE TO A WINNING SMILE

It's easy to get caught up with all the dental products and options designed to brighten your teeth and improve your smile, but it's important to remember that before considering any smile improvements - teeth whitening, dental veneers or any other options intended to make your smile more attractive and appealing – you first have to start with good oral health. And it's worth noting that the easiest and least expensive tools to help you achieve and maintain good dental health are two things you most likely have in your bathroom cabinet right now – your toothbrush and dental floss.

While most people appreciate the need to brush in the morning and at night, many people do not realize how important it is to floss their teeth every day too.

To recognize the importance of flossing, recognize that each of your teeth has five surfaces. If you only brush your teeth and not floss, you're leaving up to 40 percent of your tooth surfaces untouched, and therefore unclear. Food particles remaining in-between your teeth are therefore available to feed naturally-occurring bacteria in your mouth, eventually leading to plaque and the

formation of acids, which can cause cavities, irritate the gums and lead to the possibility of gum disease.

Gum disease is a serious dental issue, but it is also a cosmetic issue as gum disease can ruin the youthful aesthetics of your smile and also attack the bones that support your teeth.

The simple act of flossing can go a long way towards maintaining a healthy, youthful and winning smile. Please ask us for a demonstration on how to floss effectively, and which type of floss would be most effective for you.

TURN OUT THE LIGHTS ON SNORING

If you're one of the approximately ninety million adults in North America who snore, or a long-suffering partner of one of those snorers, you'll be interested in hearing about some suggestions to tone down the decibel level in your bedroom.



Snoring is produced when the muscles and soft tissues in the throat and mouth relax, making your airway smaller. The decrease in airway space increases the velocity of air flowing through the airway during breathing, which causes vibrations in the soft tissues of the mouth and throat, producing the "snoring" sound.

See if any of these "Stop Snoring" tips help your situation:

- 1. Avoid heavy meals, alcohol, muscle relaxants and sedatives before bed.** Anything that relaxes the tissues around the head and neck will restrict air passages, which tends to make the snoring worse.
- 2. Fight nasal congestion.** Try nasal strips and a humidifier in your room to help keep your nasal passages clear.
- 3. Lose weight.** There's a strong association between obesity and snoring. Yet another incentive to aim for a healthier weight.

4. Quit smoking. Aside from the health dangers associated with smoking, smoking also irritates your airway and can cause inflammation.

5. Sleep on your side. Sleeping on your back can allow your tongue and the soft tissue at the back of your throat to slide back and block your airway, leading to snoring.

6. Talk to us about a dental appliance designed to stop snoring. In some cases, a simple mouthpiece may be all you need to help keep your airway open.

While it's the subject of many jokes, snoring can also be a serious problem, associated with sleep apnea and other critical health concerns. Take the first step to a quiet night's sleep by acknowledging the issue and investigating possible solutions.

"HOW LONG WILL MY CROWN LAST?"



Dental crowns perform an important function in the mouth, as they are, in effect, a tooth's whole new outer surface. Like anything else in life, however, you pay for quality, and crowns are not inexpensive. Because of this, it's logical for patients to ask us how long their crown is expected to last. While we certainly expect crowns to last for many years, it's not an easy question to answer precisely, and here's why.

Your dental team has control of a number of factors – the choice of materials for your crown, the fit and placement of the crown in your mouth, etc. – but there are a number that we can't control, like how strong your bite is, how your teeth come together, your at-home brushing and flossing habits and even the amount of bacteria in your mouth. These are all factors in determining if your crown will last for a few years, or for decades.

Today's crowns combine practicality and beauty through all-ceramic or all-porcelain dental materials. They are not only a good option for people with metal sensitivities or

allergies, but also provide a beautiful cosmetic outcome. In fact, we recommend that dental crowns for front teeth be fully fabricated in porcelain, as the material possesses a translucency that replicates natural teeth most realistically.

Dental crowns not only add strength to your teeth, they also allow you to cosmetically enhance your smile with beautiful alternatives to your original teeth. Please ask us for details on all your crown options so you can achieve the appealing smile you desire, and the long-lasting quality you deserve.

SHARE A SMILE WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY!

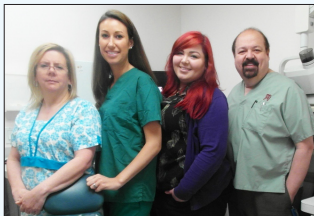
Referrals and word-of-mouth recommendations are our number one source of new patients. In fact, one of the best compliments we can receive from our clients is the referral of one of your friends, colleagues or family members, **AND** when you refer a new patient to our office, you will receive a **\$50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



**Left to Right: Chris, Sophie,
Elisa & Dr. Joseph DeLapa**

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Office Team:

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Sophie • *Registered Dental Hygienist*
Elisa • *Office Administrator*

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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