

Solutions for Beautiful Smiles Dental Topics

Compliments of Dr. Vijaya R. Cherukuri

News from the office of...



Dr. Vijaya R. Cherukuri

As we reflect upon the past year and look forward to the new one, we should take a minute now to think about our personal health.

Our newsletter this month includes a reminder that, while many people don't realize it, a dentist's job extends well beyond teeth, into what is commonly referred to as the "mouth-body connection." For this reason, this issue includes articles on oral cancer, lip protection and diabetes. I hope you enjoy our newsletter, and are encouraged to call us if you need more information on any related topics.

Best wishes to you and your family from our dental team. May 2008 bring you health, happiness and success!

All the best,

Vijaya Cherukuri

Dr. Vijaya R. Cherukuri

Even More to Smile About!

"Look Ma, no cavities!"

That famous line from an old toothpaste commercial certainly did the general population good, encouraging regular brushing and preventing dental decay. In fact, brushing one's teeth as a daily habit was actually a foreign concept until as late as after World War II, when soldiers brought the Army-enforced habit back home.



While your teeth may be cavity-free, they may not be as white or even as you would like. And that's where our cosmetic "smile solutions" come in.

Our goal is to enhance a patient's smile by creating the proper shape, color and harmony of all your teeth together.

SOME OF OUR SERVICES INCLUDE:

- **TEETH WHITENING:** Whether you're interested in quick, in-office whitening or a take-home teeth-whitening kit, you'll want to hear about our dentist-supervised, professional options for people looking for a safe and effective alternative to drugstore bleaching.
- **VENEERS:** Porcelain veneers are wafer-thin porcelain shells that are bonded onto the front side of individual teeth to cosmetically correct a number of different tooth imperfections. Easy and attractive, sometimes a few veneers are all you need to create a "movie star" smile!
- **BONDING:** Using tooth-colored material, we can close spaces between teeth, even-out chips in teeth or even replace the metal in small cavities with a "white" alternative.
- **CROWNS:** Dental crowns are designed to cover the whole visible surface of a tooth, to become the tooth's new, perfect outer surface.
- **CONTOURING AND RESHAPING:** A single session is all that's usually needed to alter the length, shape or position of teeth that may need some subtle improvements.
- **REPLACEMENT OF MISSING TEETH:** Dental implants are the latest, most comfortable and natural-looking option to fill the gap of a missing tooth.

Ask us about our many other smile options too. We have the tools to give you the smile of your dreams, to help you look and feel better about yourself.

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ORAL CANCER ALERT



As your dental professional, we're full of good reasons why you should visit the dentist on a regular basis. Preventing decay, maintaining good oral health and making sure your smile is as attractive as possible are all good incentives to visit us at least twice a year, but you probably don't give much thought to another serious reason to have your mouth checked regularly: oral cancer screenings.

According to the Oral Cancer Foundation, oral cancer – which includes mouth cancer, tongue cancer and throat cancer – is a serious worldwide concern, with approximately 37,000 new cases in 2007 diagnosed in North America alone.

You can lower your risk of oral cancer by refraining from tobacco products in any form, avoiding alcohol or drinking only in moderation, and using a lip balm that contains sunscreen to protect your lips from harmful UV rays. Awareness of the telltale signs of the disease is also important, so take a moment to familiarize yourself with these possible signs and symptoms of oral cancer:

- **Any ulcers or sores in the mouth that do not heal. Irritation or swelling of the lip or in the mouth, or a lump in the neck, lip, mouth, gums or tongue that lasts longer than two weeks.**
- **A white or red patch in the gums, tongue or lining of the mouth.**
- **A feeling that something is caught in the throat, or a sore throat that doesn't go away.**
- **Thickening in the cheek.**
- **Bleeding, or pain or numbness in the mouth. Difficulty or pain with chewing or swallowing.**
- **Loose teeth, or dentures that no longer fit due to swelling in the jaw.**

Oral cancers have an 80 to 90 percent cure rate if the cancer is found early. Unfortunately, the majority of oral cancer cases are discovered as late stage cancers, which accounts for the very high death rate of about 50 percent at five years from diagnosis. When you

apply this statistic to the one provided by the National Cancer Institute, that 1 in 98 people born today will be diagnosed with cancer of the oral cavity and pharynx during their lifetime, you can understand why we so strongly recommend regular dental checkups.

It's easy to dismiss a small lump or irritation in the mouth as a cold sore or a bite to the inside of your cheek. However, knowing now how critical early diagnosis is to long-term survival, if you have any doubts about suspicious spots or sores on your lips, tongue or anywhere in your mouth, please make sure that you call us for an appointment so we can examine it more closely. If we detect anything unusual, we will conduct further testing to ensure that you receive the appropriate care and follow-up.

Good oral care is about much more than just your teeth. If you haven't already made your next dental recare appointment, we encourage you to take care of it today.



HEALTHY, KISSABLE LIPS!

While many of us remember to apply sunscreen and lip balm for protection against the summer sun and drying heat, we sometimes forget, if we live or vacation in a place with cold, snowy conditions, that winter weather protection is also vital to healthy skin and lips.

Whether you're a constant cold-weather outdoor enthusiast or just like to take ski vacations occasionally, you should make a point of protecting your face against the winter elements, with sunscreen containing a high SPF rating. You may not think that you can get a sunburn when it's snowing, but being on the snow can actually intensify the effects of a sunburn, as the UV rays bounce off the snow and back up at you. You probably never realized you could get a sunburn from the ground up!

While you're slathering on the sunscreen, don't forget that your lips are also susceptible to sunburn. According to the Skin Cancer Foundation, your lower lip is one of the most common sites for squamous-cell carcinoma to set in. And frighteningly, the Oral Cancer Foundation claims that oral cancer is particularly dangerous because it has a high risk of producing second primary tumors. This means that patients who survive a first encounter with the disease have up to a 20 times higher risk of developing a second cancer.

Remember to pack a moisturizing lip balm with an SPF of 30 to protect your kisser throughout the day. Even after a long day of skiing or tobogganing, you'll want to re-apply some lip balm for the drive home, as UVA light can even do its damage through tinted car windows.

Protect your lips. Not only do they provide a beautiful frame for your teeth, they're an integral part of your complete smile package!



DENTAL TIPS FOR DIABETICS

If you're one of the millions of North Americans who suffer from diabetes, you need to pay special attention to your dental care, as you are especially susceptible to periodontal disease, which can lead to tooth loss.

Some people's first indications of diabetes may come from a regular dental care appointment, where the dental hygienist notices some sign of the disease, whether it be dry mouth, sore or loose teeth, burning mouth or tongue, chronic bad breath, gingivitis or gum disease. Bacteria thrive in the mouths of diabetics when there are high glucose levels present, and this increased level of bacteria, in conjunction with a patient's reduced ability to resist infection, can lead to an increased risk of gum disease.

As a diabetic, you need to be vigilant with your dental hygiene, ensuring that you floss daily, brush a minimum of twice a day with a soft toothbrush and visit the dentist for a professional examination and cleaning at least every four or six months. When you do come in for a recare appointment, remember to eat beforehand in order to ensure your blood sugar is in the normal range. If you take insulin, your best choice for a dental appointment might be in the morning, after eating a normal breakfast.

It is vitally important for you to advise us if you are already aware that you have diabetes before embarking on any dental work, especially if you are scheduled for dental surgery.



VENEERS VS. WHITENING: WHICH IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

We're deluged with images of shiny, perfect teeth in advertising, television shows and movies, and are more aware than ever of the social and professional benefits of an attractive, confident smile. So what's the best way for the average person to achieve their own "movie star" smile?

The many advances in dentistry provide a multitude of options, from simple whitening to complete smile makeovers, so the first step is to have a look at what you have, and make up a "need" versus "want" list.

What you may want is a mouth full of perfect, pearly whites. What you may already have are healthy, fairly straight teeth that you may not be happy with because they look too short, their shape isn't quite even, and their color has darkened or yellowed over the years. Before resigning yourself to a number of veneers, we may be able to simply shorten your gums to make your teeth look longer, reshape your teeth to give a straighter, more even impression and whiten your natural teeth to produce a whole new look.

If, on the other hand, you have some small gaps between your teeth, your teeth are small or slightly crooked and you have heavy discoloration that whitening alone wouldn't fully treat, then veneers may be the appropriate solution for you.

PLEASE GIVE US A CALL.

We'll be happy to review your specific situation and explain all your options.



**WE WELCOME
YOUR FAMILY AND
FRIENDS TOO!**

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. When you give us a good reference, we will ensure that the person you refer receives special attention and the finest service possible.

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 in-office or at-home whitening procedures to attractive veneers to complete smile makeovers. Our goal is to put a bright, healthy smile on our patients' faces!

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

Solutions for Beautiful Smiles



Vijaya R. Cherukuri, D.D.S., F.I.C.D.



Dr. Cherukuri and Team

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- Crowns
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- Root Canal Therapy

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