

CHANGING SMILES . . . CHANGING LIVES

NOVEMBER 2009

ISSUE 3



Grinding - "Not me!!!"

"Doc, there is no way I'm grinding my teeth at night... I snore! My wife says I sleep with my mouth wide open."

"Dr. Tanaka, are you sure I'm grinding, I know that I chew a lot of gum...could it be that???"

"I'm grinding??? Well, whatever you say, you're the doctor. (Yaaa, right)"

These are the typical responses I get when I inform patients that they are grinding their teeth - they don't believe me or they highly doubt it. Yet, the signs of grinding are like tracks of mud on a kitchen floor. The signs are hard to miss.

Why is grinding a problem? Patients that grind can wear the top surface of their enamel away. They can develop muscle spasms in their jaws and side of the face. Chronic muscle spasms can mimic "TMJ" symptoms. Teeth sensitivity and sore, aching teeth can mimic root canal pain. If the patient has gum disease, the grinding will accelerate the disease and the teeth will become more mobile- more shaky.

What's the cause? Stress. Any kind of stress. Good stress, bad stress. Overly tired stress. And having an uneven or "off" bite.

What's the cure? The simplest cure is a plastic guard ... a nightguard. 90% of the population who grind, grind at night. A simple guard will help tremendously by cushioning the bite and/or protecting the teeth from each other during the grinding

WE'VE GONE DIGITAL!!!!...X-RAYS THAT IS...

Yes, gone are the days of film x-rays in our office. We now will be taking your x-rays digitally with a sensor that is much more comfortable than the old film. It's like comparing picture taking with film as opposed to a digital camera. Decay and gum disease will be easier to see - **so you better floss and brush really good!!!**



Dana Okada

Dana is our hard working scheduling coordinator. She's been part of our family for 2 years already!!! My how time flies. Dana's laugh is contagious and she'll brighten your day like she does ours.



Dari Fujimoto

Dari is our part time "floater"- no she really doesn't float, but to us she is like an angel that glides through our office helping us with all the little-big things that if left undone make us go crazy. Thank you, Dari!!!

The Nicest Compliment

One of the nicest compliments we receive from our patients is the referral of a friend, co-worker or family member. Thank you for entrusting us with their care.