



**LEGACY  
DENTAL CARE**  
BY BRANDON COUSINS, DDS

## TIPS & TRICKS FOR KEEPING A BRIGHT SMILE

- ELECTRIC TOOTHBRUSH
- BRUSH AFTER YOU EAT
- FLOSS
- HOW TO DEAL WITH BAD BREATHE
- SUGAR
- WHEN TO USE STRAWS
- DRY MOUTH
- FLAT CHIPPED TEETH
- CROWDED LOWER FRONT TEETH
- WINE AND TEA
- REMOVABLE APPLIANCES
- WHITENING

FOR THE BEST PATIENT OUTCOMES, WE RECOMMEND FOLLOWING THESE 12 TOP TIPS FOR KEEPING A HEALTHY, HAPPY BRIGHT SMILE!

### ELECTRIC TOOTHBRUSH

WE SEE A BIG DIFFERENCE IN DENTAL HEALTH BETWEEN PATIENTS USING A MANUAL TOOTHBRUSH AND THOSE WITH A POWER TOOTHBRUSH. WHEN USING AN ELECTRIC OR MANUAL TOOTHBRUSH, ANGLE THE BRUSH HEAD 45 DEGREES AND AIM AT THE GUM LINE.

## BRUSH AFTER YOU EAT

EATING AFTER YOU BRUSH IS LIKE DRIVING YOUR CAR THROUGH A MUD PUDDLE AFTER YOU LEAVE THE CAR WASH. YOUR CAR DOESN'T APPRECIATE IT, AND NEITHER DOES YOUR TEETH! EAT YOUR BREAKFAST, DRINK YOUR COFFEE, AND THEN BRUSH YOUR TEETH. AN EXTRA TOOTHBRUSH AT WORK IS HANDY FOR BRUSHING BETWEEN MEALS THROUGHOUT THE DAY. ALSO, REFRAIN FROM DRINKING HOT BEVERAGES OR COFFEE FOR AT LEAST 30 MINUTES TO AN HOUR AFTER BRUSHING.

## BAD BREATH

BAD BREATH TYPICALLY COMES FROM A DRY MOUTH, UNHEALTHY GUMS, THE TONGUE, AND, SURPRISINGLY, TONSIL STONES! DR. COUSINS CAN HELP DIAGNOSE WHICH FACTOR CONTRIBUTES MOST TO HOW YOUR BREATH SMELLS AND THE BEST METHODS TO TREAT THE UNDERLYING CAUSE OF BAD BREATH

## SUGAR

SUGAR FEEDS BACTERIA; WHEN BACTERIA EAT SUGAR, THEY PRODUCE AN ACID THAT BREAKS DOWN TOOTH STRUCTURE. A HIGH-SUGAR DIET AND INADEQUATE TEETH CLEANING ARE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO DECAYED TEETH. IF WE CAN GET THESE TWO THINGS UNDER CONTROL, YOU WILL SEE A SUBSTANTIAL DIFFERENCE IN YOUR ORAL HEALTH AND, SUBSEQUENTLY, THE NUMBER OF VISITS TO THE DENTIST!

## WHAT ELSE TO LOOK OUT FOR?

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## DRY MOUTH

MANY MEDICATIONS ARE THE MOST COMMON CONTRIBUTORS TO DRY MOUTH. THE ORAL CAVITY UTILIZES SALIVA TO HELP BREAK DOWN FOOD AND PROTECT THE TEETH. WHEN WE DON'T HAVE OPTIMUM SALIVA FLOW AND A HIGH SUGAR/CARBOHYDRATE DIET, THE DAMAGE TO OUR TEETH CAN BE CATASTROPHIC QUICKLY. DR. COUSINS CAN HELP IDENTIFY THE SOURCE OF YOUR DRY MOUTH AND SUGGEST VARIOUS TOOLS TO PREVENT DRY MOUTH FROM DESTROYING YOUR TEETH.

## FLOSS YOUR TEETH

WATERPIKS ARE BETTER THAN NOTHING AND AN EXCELLENT OPTION FOR PATIENTS WITH LIMITED DEXTERITY, BUT IT DOES NOT REPLACE FLOSS. ALERT! ANOTHER CAR WASH ANALOGY: WATERPIKS ARE LIKE GOING THROUGH THE CAR WASH WITHOUT SCRUBBING YOUR CAR—YOU STILL SEE A FILM OF DIRT ON YOUR VEHICLE AFTER YOU THINK IT HAS BEEN WASHED. WATERPIKS ARE GREAT AT DERIDING THE TEETH OF LARGE FOOD AND HEAVY PLAQUE, BUT THEY DO NOT REMOVE THE BACTERIA FROM BETWEEN THE GUMS AND THE TEETH AS EFFECTIVELY AS FLOSS. WE CAN OFFER SPECIFIC TECHNIQUES AND PRODUCTS TO HELP YOU FLOSS ON A DAILY BASIS.

## STRAWS

WHEN WE DRINK A BEVERAGE WITHOUT A STRAW, THE TOP TEETH ARE USUALLY INVOLVED MORE THAN THE BOTTOM TEETH. SO, WE TYPICALLY SEE MORE CAVITIES IN THE TOP TEETH OF PATIENTS WHO REGULARLY DRINK SUGARY BEVERAGES WITHOUT A STRAW. IF YOU HAVE TO DRINK SOMETHING WITH SUGAR, DON'T SIP IT FOR LONG PERIODS; WASH IT DOWN WITH WATER. MONITORING YOUR SUGAR CONSUMPTION, IN GENERAL, HAS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT IMPACT.

### FLAT, CHIPPED FRONT TEETH

WHEN THE TEETH AREN'T IN THE CORRECT POSITION, THEY CHIP AND WEAR FASTER THAN IF THEY WERE IN THE POSITION THEY WERE DESIGNED FOR. CROWDED TEETH ARE ALMOST ALWAYS ASSOCIATED WITH CHIPPED AND WORN TEETH. WHEN YOU GRIND YOUR TEETH, THE PROBLEM GETS WORSE FASTER. ASK DR. COUSINS HOW YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO CORRECT THE SOURCE OF THE PROBLEM WITH CLEARALIGNER THERAPY OR WEARING AN APPLIANCE WHILE YOU SLEEP.

### CROWDED LOWER FRONTTEETH

IT WAS COMMONLY BELIEVED THAT CROWDED TEETH WERE DUE TO WISDOM TEETH BEING PRESENT OR LEFT IN TOO LONG. WE KNOW NOW THAT THE ISSUE IS MOSTLY CAUSED BY THE LOWER JAW SHRINKING TOWARDS THE TONGUE AS WE GET OLDER. THIS RESULTS IN A LOSS OF BONE REAL ESTATE FOR OUR LOWER TEETH, AND THEY START CROWDING OVER ONE ANOTHER. WE CAN HELP REVERSE THIS PROBLEM ONCE AGAIN WITH CLEAR ALIGNER THERAPY.

### FLAT, CHIPPED FRONT TEETH

IF YOU HAVE DENTURES, MAKE SURE YOU TAKE THEM OUT TO SLEEP. RETAINERS SHOULD ALSO BE ADEQUATELY CLEANED EVERY NIGHT BEFORE YOU PLACE THEM IN YOUR MOUTH. ALWAYS FLOSS AND BRUSH BEFORE PLACING YOUR RETAINERS IN YOUR MOUTH TO PREVENT BAD BREATH AND, OF COURSE, TOOTH DECAY.

### WINE & TEA

FOR US WINE LOVERS, WE WANT TO BE ABLE TO ENJOY OUR LIQUID DELIGHT WITHOUT STAINING OUR TEETH. RED WINES WITH LESS TANNINS ARE MUCH LESS LIKELY TO STAIN YOUR TEETH. FOR EXAMPLE, PINOT NOIR IS A GREAT CHOICE. OUR BEST TIP FOR TEA LOVERS IS TO FOLLOW THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PROPER AMOUNT OF TIME TO STEEP AND REMOVE THE TEA BAG FROM YOUR MUG. THE MORE TEA IS STEEPED (ESPECIALLY BLACK TEA), THE MORE IT WILL STAIN YOUR TEETH WHEN CONSUMED, AND MORE SO WITHOUT A STRAW.

### TEETH WHITENING

WE DIRECT MANY OF OUR PATIENTS TO AFFORDABLE WHITENING OPTIONS THEY CAN USE AT HOME TO HELP MAINTAIN THEIR WHITE SMILE! IF YOUR TEETH ARE SENSITIVE AFTER WHITENING, VARIOUS PRODUCTS CAN BE USED TO PREVENT THE SENSITIVITY FROM BECOMING TOO EXTREME. SENSITIVITY FROM WHITENING IS 100% REVERSIBLE AFTER USING WHITENING PRODUCTS. HIGH FLUORIDE OR SENSITIVITY TOOTHPASTE CAN ALSO HELP WITH SENSITIVITY AFTER WHITENING. ASK US WHICH PRODUCTS WE RECOMMEND!

