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Dental Health and Well-Being

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Dental Health and Well-Being
NEWS
SPRING 2013

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Our passion is to not only restore health and function for our patient's mouths, but to restore aesthetics. To that end, we believe in treating each person individually and designing treatment for their specific needs. We provide a comfortable, professional, and caring environment for our patients and staff. From our hygiene department to our reception area, we strive to provide the most up-to-date, state-of-the-art care.

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Welcome from Dr. Dassenko

WELCOME TO OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER FOR 2013!

IT'S BEEN A BUSY TIME since our last newsletter, and I'm excited to share some of what's been happening in the practice and in our lives here on the Central Coast. Our daughter Alexandra and her husband Kai have moved back from the U.K. and are settling in the Los Angeles area to start their careers in the U.S. It's great to have them a bit nearer and to see them more often. Both of them are fine musicians, so it's been fun to play chamber music again with Alex, and now with Kai too! I especially enjoyed having them join the orchestra for the San Luis Obispo Symphony's opening concert this past October.



Last time I wrote you I promised pictures from last summer's volunteer dentistry trip to Guatemala, so I've included a few with this newsletter. It was a wonderful experience and we enjoyed the opportunity to help, even though we were able to make only a small dent in the huge need. My "assistant" in the pictures is my good-natured husband Tom, who was willing to take off his "radiologist" hat and try dental assisting for the week. The experience gave him a lot of sympathy and even higher regard for my assistants Teresa, Mary, and Andrea! The clinic was established in the small town of Peronia as a gift to the community; although it is currently staffed mostly by volunteer U. S. dentists, the goal is to fully staff it with Guatemalan dentists within the next five years so the foundation can construct more clinics in other needy areas. One of the most rewarding experiences was mentoring a young Guatemalan dental student and guiding him safely through a tough tooth extraction on one of our patients. I had fun trying to adapt my Spanish to "dentistry professor" mode!

As always, this newsletter offers information on a topic of particular interest—this time, the many links between healthy gums and overall health. My lead hygienist, Amy Bisely, has compiled some of the latest research and presented it on the next page to help us all see the connections. We hope her summary will help you better understand the relationship between periodontal disease and many other systemic diseases, so that you can keep both your teeth and the rest of your body healthy for a long, long time! The newsletter also features a short bio on each member of our hygiene staff. Together, they have a combined experience of 68 years, and each is supremely skilled and knowledgeable in her field. I'm so proud of them all!

I hope you enjoy our newsletter. Please give us your feedback either online or when you're next in the office. Meanwhile, I thank you for your trust and friendship, and I look forward to seeing you soon.

Yours in good health, *Pam*

PHOTOS FROM GUATEMALA DENTISTRY TRIP



The town of Antigua, Guatemala with one of the volcanos in the background; relieved young patient after a tooth extraction; Pam working with third year Guatemalan dental student Mario



Classics Finale

SATURDAY, MAY 4 • 8 PM

CHRISTOPHER COHAN CENTER, SAN LUIS OBISPO

FEATURING

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Andrew Duckles, Viola

JOSEPH HAYDN / *Symphony No.92 • "The Oxford"*

RICHARD STRAUSS / *Don Quixote, Op. 35*

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SAN LUIS OBISPO SYMPHONY MICHAEL NOWAK, MUSIC DIRECTOR

A HEALTHY MOUTH = A HEALTHY BODY

BY AMY BISELY, RDH, LEAD HYGIENIST



OVER THE YEARS you have probably heard about the links between gum disease and systemic illness. Now there is even more scientific evidence that these links not only exist but are more widespread than previously thought. Many systemic diseases are now associated with the bacteria and the inflammatory process of gum disease. In fact, patients with severe gum disease have 21% higher health care costs as compared to those with no gum disease. The good news is that gum disease can be easily treated. Even

though it is a silent, non-painful disease, our team is well trained to recognize and treat it. Here is a list of some of the links between active gum disease and other diseases.

IMPROVING YOUR GUM HEALTH CAN HELP MANAGE YOUR DIABETES

Diabetes can be such a destructive disease, it is nice to hear some hopeful news about it for a change. Did you know . . .

- If you have periodontal disease (gum disease) and a family history of diabetes, hypertension, or high cholesterol you have a 27-53% higher risk of having undiagnosed diabetes.
- If you have diabetes you should be carefully screened for periodontal disease since it may impact your ability to balance blood sugar (HbA1c) levels.

Science has shown that it is important to treat diabetic patients as early as possible. Diabetics are twice as likely to show improvement in their blood sugar levels after periodontal therapy. This study shows that when active periodontal disease is treated the blood sugar levels go down. Who wouldn't want to benefit from that?

SOURCE: *J Clin Periodontol.* 2011 Feb; 38(2): 142-7

RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS IS LINKED TO HARMFUL ORAL BACTERIA AND A HIGHER RISK FOR GUM DISEASE

People with long-standing active RA have a much higher incidence of periodontal disease than healthy patients. High levels of the bacteria *Tannerella forsythia* and *Prevotella intermedia* have been found in the synovial (joint) fluid of RA patients. These bacteria are considered major pathogens associated with gum disease. This means that Rheumatoid Arthritis patients need to be monitored more closely and their disease treated proactively.

SOURCE: *Division of Rheumatology, Nazilli State Hospital, Turkey. Annals of Rheumatic Diseases* 71(9): 1541-4

HEALTHY GUMS CAN REDUCE YOUR RISK OF PANCREATIC CANCER

Over a 16 year period reviewers found that men with a history of periodontal disease had a 63% greater risk of pancreatic cancer than men without a history of periodontal disease. This study provides a long term association between periodontal disease and pancreatic cancer and is yet another reason to control periodontal disease early.

SOURCE: 1. *Reuters Health* 11/06 2. *American Association for Cancer research* 11/06

TREATING GUM DISEASE AND THE BACTERIA THAT CAUSE IT CAN HELP REDUCE THE RISK OF HEART ATTACK

The presence of the pathogenic bacteria *Tannaerella forsythia* and *Prevotella intermedia* combined with an increase in the total number of periodontal bacteria were both associated with increased risks of heart attack.

SOURCE: *Rabia Mughal* 4/09

REDUCE YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE BY CONTROLLING YOUR GUM DISEASE

Data provides evidence of a direct relationship between levels of periodontal bacteria and increased numbers in both Systolic BP and Diastolic BP. The upper number, Systolic Blood Pressure, was an average 9mmHg higher and the lower number Diastolic Blood Pressure was an average 5mmHg higher in patients with periodontal disease. The results provide more evidence of a link between periodontal pathogens and risk factors for heart disease.

SOURCE: *J Hypertens.* 20 Jul; 28 (7) :1413-21

CONTROLLING GUM INFECTION CAN LOWER YOUR RISK OF CANCER

Substantial evidence supports an association between chronic infections/inflammation, and cancer. Each millimeter of bone loss around the teeth is associated with a 4 x increased risk of Head and Neck Squamous Cell Carcinoma. Patients with gum disease are more likely to have Squamous Cell Carcinoma than those without (32.8% vs 11.5%). The link between gum disease and cancer is strongest among people with cancers of the mouth.

SOURCE: *Cancer Epidemiol Biomarkers Prev* 2009; 18 (9): 2406-12

And last but not least, be certain to read this . . .

TOOTH SCALING CAN DECREASE YOUR RISK OF STROKE AND HEART ATTACK

This is very exciting as it shows a direct link between tooth scaling and the risk of cardiovascular events. This study involved over 20,000 participants for an average of 7 years. The authors found that the group that had undergone tooth scaling to treat gum infection had a lower incidence of acute myocardial infarction, stroke and total cardiovascular events.

SOURCE: *American Journal of Medicine*

I hope this helps you understand more about the connection between your mouth and your body. The good news is that we can help you prevent and control gum disease and in the process help you stay healthier and live longer! If you would like a copy of any of these articles please don't hesitate to ask. We look forward to seeing you soon!



Clowning around above are Britta, Amy, Elizabeth, and Michele.

OUR HYGIENISTS

Our hygiene staff of five is a group of exceptional women who love what they do and are dedicated to helping our patients keep their teeth and gums healthy!

■ **AMY BISELY**, our lead hygienist, has been a hygienist for 27 years and has been with our office for five years. She grew up in the Los Gatos area and earned her hygiene degree from Foothill College. *Amy once performed in comedy clubs as a juggler!*

■ **CARRIE DUTRA** has practiced hygiene for six years and has worked in our office for three years. She grew up here on the Central Coast and received her hygiene degree from Cypress College. *Carrie is crazy about Disneyland!*

■ **BRITTA SWEARINGEN** has been a hygienist for eight years. She earned her hygiene degree from Cabrillo College and is currently completing her Bachelors in Dental Hygiene with a concentration in teaching at Northern Arizona University. Britta grew up in SLO and has worked in our office since the start of her career. *Britta loves making music with her sister Inga!*

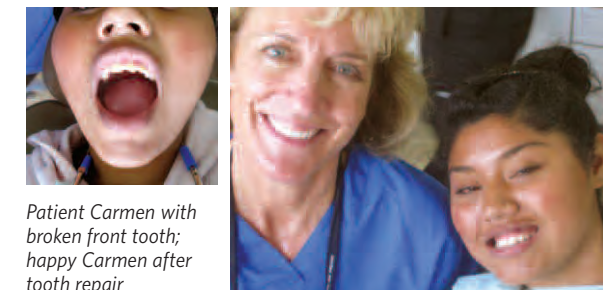
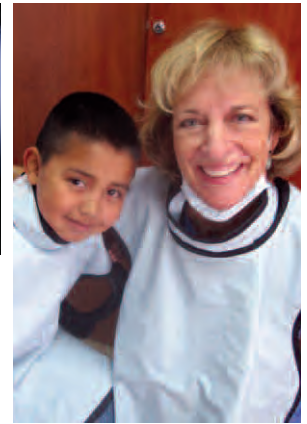
■ **ELIZABETH RAY** has practiced hygiene for 21 years and has been with our office for nearly four years. She grew up in the Bay Area and earned her hygiene degree at Phoenix College after earning her Bachelor's degree at Cal Poly. *Elizabeth enjoys country swing dancing!*

■ **MICHELE AVREA** has been a hygienist for over 6 years. She earned her degree at Oxnard College and has been practicing in our office for 3 years. She grew up in Southern California. *Michele loves outdoor activities like hiking, biking, and kayaking!*

PHOTOS FROM GUATEMALA DENTISTRY TRIP *continued*



One of my favorite patients, Elias getting ready for several fillings and extractions; Elias and me with our x ray shields. Below, Elias all done and smiling!



Patient Carmen with broken front tooth; happy Carmen after tooth repair



Give the Gift

OF HEALTHY TEETH AND GUMS TO A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER

\$98 Special Offer (\$229 value)

The bearer of this Gift Certificate is entitled to a Comprehensive Exam, Full Mouth X-Rays and a Personal Consultation with Dr. Dassenko.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 549-8483

