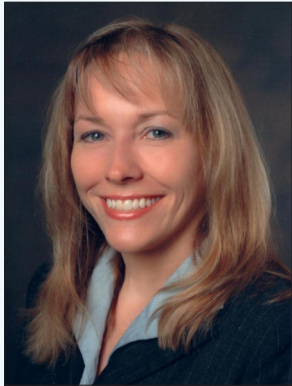


# Dental Health News®

## News From the Office of:



**Dr. Tina Brenza**

Welcome to our summer issue! We hope you're enjoying this wonderful season.

Many patients find that the summer is a great time to schedule that dental appointment they didn't have time for earlier in the year. Households with children on summer holidays especially appreciate scheduling in dental and other appointments for the kids, not having to interrupt school time.

Whether you're due for a re-care appointment, have a specific dental concern you'd like us to evaluate, or if you've been wondering about cosmetic improvements — from tooth whitening to a complete smile makeover — please call us. We'll be pleased to answer all your questions.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

*Tina Brenza*

Dr. Tina Brenza

## THE HIP BONE'S CONNECTED TO THE ... JAW BONE?

The lyrics to the old song, "Dem Bones" don't connect the hipbone directly to your mouth, but a surgeon might, by canceling hip surgery if the patient is suffering from acute gum disease. The reason for the cancellation would be for what is commonly referred to as the "mouth-body connection," where infections in the mouth have been known to travel to other parts of the body and compromise the success of seemingly unrelated medical procedures.



If you've already had a hip replacement, one of your doctor's after-care advisements would have been to take antibiotics before any future dental visit. The American Academy of Orthopedic Surgery confirms that dental work can push bacteria into your bloodstream, causing an infection in your joint replacement. So, patients need to be proactive about preventing infection by using antibiotics before any type of dental work. Many patients with a history of heart disease are also advised to take antibiotics before their dental visits, so we ask that you please be aware of any pre-visit dental precautions you may have for your specific medical condition.

For more mouth-body connections, ask us about evidence pointing to a higher risk of gum disease in people with diabetes, and a possibility of an

elevated risk of certain heart abnormalities, stroke and adverse pregnancy outcomes in patients with periodontal infections.

Knowing about the mouth-body connection helps people understand how essential regular dental visits are. One of the standard procedures during a dental checkup, for example, is to remove plaque from your teeth. The act of removing this clear, sticky film of bacteria is the first step in preventing dental infection and disease. If plaque is not removed, it hardens into tartar and can lead to an infection of the tissues surrounding and supporting the teeth.

A dental checkup is an essential service. Please be sure to maintain a regular dental re-care schedule for optimum oral and general health.

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# NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN!

It's amazing how time flies — especially the time between dental visits! Although dental appointments may not top your list of favorite activities, it is vital to maintain regular dental continuing-care appointments, even if your teeth have no symptoms of damage or neglect.



While there is no universal “right” number of times to visit the dentist for regular continuing-care appointments, the recommended average is at least two visits a year. However, there are exceptions, and each person needs their own individual schedule for appointments.

Your appointment schedule will depend on specific dental issues, such as the amount of plaque and calculus buildup, decay rate, your susceptibility to gum disease, and any specific health issues you have, which might lead to a higher risk of gum disease.

What should you expect during your regular continuing-care sessions? First, we'll look for any deterioration in fillings, crowns or other restorations, new decay, signs of

periodontal (gum) disease, root cavities (decay in the roots of teeth exposed by receding gums) and impacted wisdom teeth. We'll also perform a detailed check for unusual sores or changes in your tissues that may indicate oral cancer. To ensure that bacteria are removed from around and below the gum line, we will include scaling and polishing procedures to remove plaque, calculus and stains from teeth.

If you haven't already made your next dental appointment, please call us today. Great dental care is one of the most important investments you'll make in your life, and we'd like to help you keep your teeth and gums healthy now, and maintain their health right into your twilight years.



## SAFE AND STERILE

Every season seems to bring its own health concerns. From colds and the flu to airborne viruses, there always seems to be something to worry about. That's why our dental office is proactive in the fight against the threat of transmitting viruses and disease, by following standard, universal safety precautions.

You'll notice that our dental staff wear protective garb such as gloves, masks and eyewear. After each patient visit, the gloves are discarded, hands are washed and a new pair of gloves is donned for the next patient.

What you might not realize is the degree of sterilization to our equipment, behind the scenes. We sterilize all our dental instruments, including the handpieces and drills, following specific precautions. Some dental offices use heat sterilization, while others opt for chemical sterilization, but all qualified dental offices will ensure that, no matter which sterilization method they use on their dental

equipment, all bacteria, viruses and other organisms are killed. Items such as needles and saliva ejectors that cannot be sterilized are used only once, for each individual patient, and then are disposed of in special containers.

If you have any questions on equipment sterilization, or would like to see how it's done in our office, please do not hesitate to ask!



# GO GREEN!

Making environmentally sound decisions, from dental supplies to décor, is very important to our practice. We want to take excellent care of our patients as well as the planet. Listed below are the green improvements that have been recently made in the office. Every effort is made to purchase only items made in the United States. Please ask us more about any of our products/practices that we use to make the world a better place!

- \* Reclaimed wood flooring in the reception room from a 100 year-old home in Rockford (low-VOC water based finish).
- \* Environmentally-friendly reception room furniture.
- \* Solar attic fan.
- \* Faucet aerators to reduce water flow to 1 gallon per minute.
- \* Energy efficient lighting (CFL, T8 fluorescents, LED).
- \* No-VOC paint.
- \* Reclaimed flooring in the remodeled treatment room, along with energy-efficient LED operatory light.
- \* Organic hand soap, hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies.
- \* 100% post-consumer recycled content paper towels, computer paper, and other office supplies (chlorine-free processing).
- \* Energy-efficient HVAC system with controlled thermostat settings.
- \* Air unit that is constantly bringing in fresh air (not recirculating stagnant air).
- \* Oil-free dental air compressor.
- \* We print on the back of all re-usable paper.
- \* We only order once per month from our dental supplier to reduce the amount of deliveries.
- \* We recycle everything possible!

## PORCELAIN CROWNS

The recommended treatment for a broken, worn-down or severely decayed tooth, or one that is weakened due to an excessively large filling, is a dental crown.

Unlike a filling that simply fills in a portion of a tooth, a dental crown fully "caps" the whole visible surface of the tooth, much like a thimble covers a finger, to become a tooth's new outer surface. In the past, crowns were only available in metal, but today's strong ceramic materials allow them to be manufactured in porcelain, combining beauty and strength in one practical and attractive unit.

The material chosen for your dental crown depends in part on where the crown is needed. 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. Back teeth, which are subject to increased force from biting, chewing and grinding food, may require a combination of metal and ceramics.

Dental crowns not only add strength to your teeth, they also allow you to cosmetically enhance your smile with beautiful alternatives to original teeth that are holding you back from the smile you desire. Please ask us if porcelain crowns are the answer in your quest for a stronger, more attractive smile!

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