

from **the** dentist

TOOTH EROSION *Other reasons for loss of tooth structure*



The tough, white surface of teeth, called tooth enamel, is the hardest surface in the human body. Through every day processes, like eating and drinking, this ultra hard surface can become eroded by naturally occurring dietary acids.

Our last newsletter discussed tooth erosion that is not caused by tooth decay, but by attacks with acids in foods and beverages. This month we are going to discuss another cause of tooth enamel erosion- **INTRINSIC EROSION**.

There are a few varied reasons that we can get a gradual erosion of the enamel on our teeth other than trauma or decay. The **EXTRINSIC EROSION** we showed last month was caused by acids from various sources. There are also some potential problems with acid that comes from within ourselves. Stomach acids can come in contact with our teeth under some conditions.

Disorders like gastroesophageal reflux (acid reflux) also known as GERD, and vomiting expose teeth to powerful stomach acids that decalcify even the hardest enamel.



This exposes the softer, darker layer of the tooth known as dentin. When acid reflux, or an eating disorder like bulimia, continually exposes teeth to powerful acids, the results become chronic. Teeth can become translucent, pitted, cracked and discolored.

Patients can experience extreme tooth sensitivity and softened teeth become more susceptible to decay. Depending on the degree of damage, several corrective options are available.

Another common type of tooth loss is caused by **GRINDING** of your teeth. Most people will have times when they put their teeth together and squeeze or rub. If this is done occasionally, it is usually not a problem. **However-** there are many



instances when this becomes a habit that the patient isn't even aware of. It is quite common to do this while sleeping. This type of habit can damage some or all of the teeth. It can also lead to changes in your bite, or symptoms of sore jaw muscles or joints. It is also a leading cause of fracturing of teeth. None of this damage is occurring while eating, but during times when there is nothing in your mouth! This can cause several problems that can range from simple to sometimes extensive rehabilitation. Like everything in dentistry, it is always easier to catch these problems early and try to prevent the damage. We can offer several options for treatment of the damage done by grinding, but prevention is still the best choice.

Seasonal Tooth Tips

- Go for brushes with soft nylon bristles.
- Replace your brush about every three months.
- Use a mouthguard if you play contact sports.
- Floss every day.
- See your dentist regularly!

Thank you for all your referrals. We appreciate them!

Manage It!

Your
environment
can hurt
your smile!

Smoking is the single
major preventable risk
factor for gum disease



though, that **whether you're considering whitening, veneers, or restorations like crowns or implants, you need strong teeth or bones and healthy gums to get your most attractive - and *lasting* - outcome.**

Brush, floss, and rinse to banish gum disease!

Early disease includes gums that...

If left untreated gum disease can...

That can lead to...



How Do They Do That?



...Naturally!

Do you think they inject Omega-3 fatty acids into *every* one of those eggs? Surprise! Actually, they alter the chickens' feed – often with pleasant-tasting ground flaxseed which is higher in Omega-3 fatty acids and lower in saturated fatty acids than other grains.

Cold water fish like herring, mackerel, and salmon are superior sources of Omega-3, but all sources, according to research, can be beneficial to your health. One caveat, though – if you opt for supplements, Omega-3s have blood-thinning potential and can interact with medications.

Did you know that Omega-3s may prevent soft tissue and bone loss associated with gum disease? Not only that, but research also suggests they may...

- improve cardiovascular health
- help brain function
- protect expectant mothers against post-partum depression
- diminish joint inflammation.

Eggscellent!

A Piece Of The Puzzle About oral cancer

Worldwide, close to 400,000 new cases of oral cancer are diagnosed each year. If diagnosed early, oral cancer can be highly curable, and now research has provided another clue. Chronic gum disease in men may increase their risk of tongue cancer!

Even after adjusting for smoking, age, and the number of teeth, each millimeter of bone loss due to gum disease was associated with more than five times the increase in the risk of tongue cancer.

This is interesting because today more than 25% of oral cancer victims are young adults who have none of the usual risk factors like tobacco use, alcohol use, diabetes, or HIV.

Viruses and bacteria in gum tissues could be toxic to surrounding cells, or could indirectly contribute to cancer through inflammation. Please have regular periodontal and oral cancer exams.

Focus On You

Your oral and overall health matter

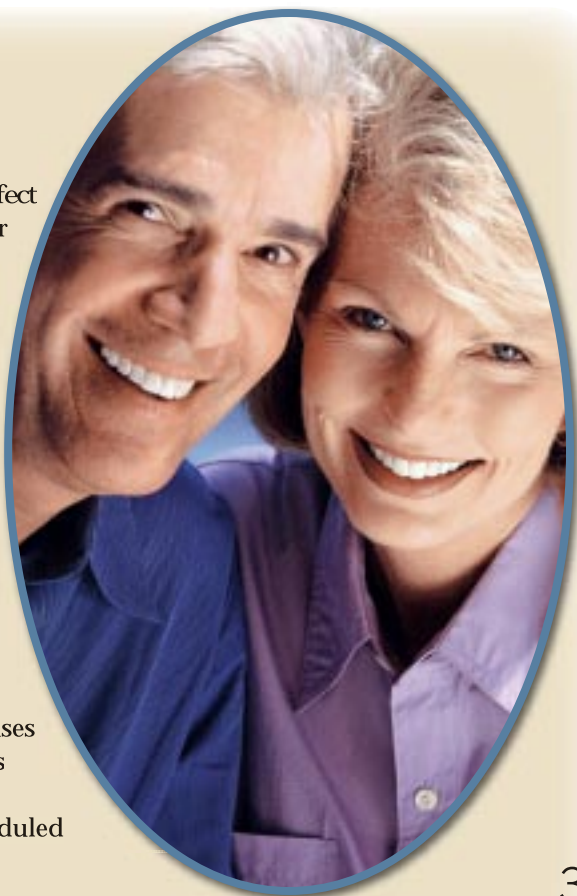
Imagine if a wound in your forearm became increasingly swollen and inflamed, yet was left untreated. You might worry that it would eventually affect your health. Well, your oral tissue is equal to the amount of skin between your wrist and elbow ... and many scientists believe that gum diseases, like other infections, have the potential to influence the rest of your body.

This is not a new idea. In 1891, *The Human Mouth As A Focus of Infection* proposed that oral microbes affect overall health. However, in the absence of adequate science, focal theory gradually fell out of favor. Still, the mouth-body link regained credibility when newer research was emphasized in the *Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health in America* in 2001.

Associations have been made between gum disease and heart and stroke, some cancers, diabetes, kidney disease, lung disease, Crohn's disease, Alzheimer's, osteoporosis, premature deliveries, and toxemia. The strength and precise nature of these associations are unclear. However, long-term studies and improved research designs that consider factors like age and tobacco use are creating a more complete picture.

Your mouth is a complex ecosystem harboring many kinds of bacteria. Viruses and inflammation have also been suggested as possible factors. Thus it appears unlikely that a single "gorillacillin" superdrug will present the solution.

We urge you to maintain your home care routines and your regularly scheduled visits with us to help maintain your optimal oral health.



DENTAL MISSION TRIP

Gambia, Africa

Erin Guttormson- one of the dedicated people here at *Souris Valley Dental* recently made a dental mission trip to Africa. Erin traveled with a group of dental mission workers to the village of Bwiam, Gambia to provide dental care to children and young adults in a “rustic” clinic setting. The group is called “*A Hand in Health*”. Erin and her group spent two weeks working in difficult conditions to serve the people of the area. Erin is applying to dental schools at this time, and will continue her service to all of you in the meantime. Thanks Erin for sharing your experiences with all of us.



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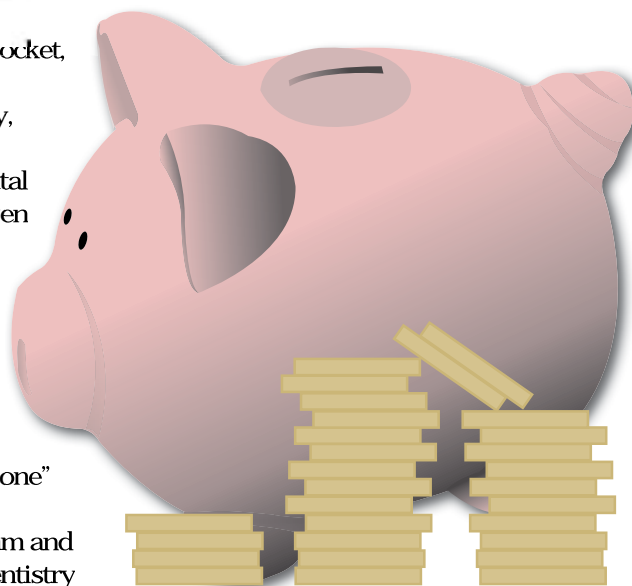
Is There A Hole In Your Pocket?

IF you had a hole in your pocket, you'd want to fix it before you lost your wallet or your money, right? Surprisingly, however, many of our patients with dental insurance “lose” hundreds (even thousands) of dollars a year because they fail to use or maximize their insurance or flex benefits before year's end. Once these benefits are gone, they are lost forever... they don't apply to the next year. These are benefits “someone” has paid for.

So if you are due for an exam and cleaning or need additional dentistry done, please give us a call before the end of the year to schedule an appointment.

Sew up that hole in your pocket now, before it's too late!

Your friends at *Souris Valley Dental*.



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