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Almost As Good As A Crystal Ball!

Dr. George Whiteside is pleased to announce the *Diagnodent Laser Caries Detection System*.



decay on chewing surfaces of back teeth is particularly difficult until the decay is well into the tooth. The longer decay is present, the more damage occurs.

Early treatment often helps patients avoid crowns to repair large cavities and some root canals, so patients save time and expense.

With 95% accuracy, Diagnodent uses a painless light that scans grooves and cracks of teeth. A readout and an audible signal occur when decay is found.

"We have always been committed to maximizing patient comfort and helping patients avoid problems. This technology gives us an advanced way to achieve this," states Dr. Whiteside.

For generations, dentists have had to rely on visual examination, probing and viewing bitewing X-rays to detect tooth decay. These traditional methods are only up to 60% effective. X-ray detection of

Menstrual Cycle Affects Periodontal Health

According to recent findings published in the *Journal of Periodontology*, many women report increased inflammation and discomfort of the gums associated with their menstrual cycle.

Symptoms include gums that bleed with minor irritation, redness to the gums, oral ulcers, a slight burning sensation and general pain and discomfort in the gums.

Researchers compared the gingival and periodontal status of premenopausal women between the ages of 20 to 50 at different times in their menstrual cycles. They measured plaque index, gingival index, probing depth, gingival recession and gum attachment levels.

Inflammation was lower during menstruation than during ovulation and premenstruation, which may be due to changing hormonal levels.

Further studies are planned. In the meantime, Dr. Whiteside encourages women in this age group to relay gum symptoms being experienced on a cyclical basis. Also, if taking prescription or over-the-counter medications, be sure to mention these.



Jodi Then

Twenty Years Of Smiles!

October 2004 marks the 20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY of Jodi Avoglia as Dr. Whiteside's Dental Assistant.

"Jodi has been a pleasure to work with all these years," states Dr. Whiteside. *"She is knowledgeable, compassionate, friendly, kind, helpful, and always delightful. I have been very fortunate that she has tolerated me for so long!"* Jodi enjoyed a fun celebration, including a bouquet of 20 long-stemmed roses from Dr. Whiteside!



Still Smiling!

Hurricane Relief For Smiles

During the aftermath of Hurricane Charley, Dr. Whiteside joined several dentists in the Fort Myers area who donated toothbrushes and toothpaste for its victims.

While overcoming the destruction of recent storms, those who lost much can keep their smile at its best as they put the pieces back together. We wish all who endured losses and hardship during this time smiles of strength and resilience.



Dr. Whiteside Attends National Meeting

The 145th Annual Session of the American Dental Association

was held in Orlando, September 29 – October 3. Dentists and related professionals from around the world were in attendance for an up-to-date view of technology, techniques, and research. Dr. Whiteside was among those who gained greater insight into dentistry for today AND tomorrow!

Your Medical History Is Important To YOUR SMILE

While personal privacy causes some reluctance in sharing medical information, the impact of NOT providing your dentist with full information could have negative results.

According to the Academy of General Dentistry, patients should mention everything about their health, even if they don't think it relates to the mouth. Failing to mention something as simple as taking herbal supplements could lead to complications.

For instance, taking Coumadin, a blood thinner, can cause greater bleeding during extractions and other procedures.

Dr. Whiteside structures care on an individual basis. Knowing *all* the facts will give you an overall healthy experience.

New Patients Always Welcome

Dr. Whiteside and his staff are always happy to welcome new patients. We appreciate your recommendations to others. Thank you for sending new smiles our way!

Yikes! Is It Year-End Already?

In November and December of each year, many patients arrange treatment to take advantage of unused insurance benefits. Because the schedule fills quickly at this time, please make your appointments as early as possible.

Also, keep in mind that some treatments require more than one appointment to complete. It is beneficial to arrange appointments early to ensure treatment is concluded at a designated point so you receive maximum coverage from your insurance.

Are YOU More Susceptible To Cavities?

You'd rather avoid a cavity than have it repaired – right? That's what we want, too! Although daily home care and regular dental cleanings help prevent problems from occurring, some people are more susceptible to decay than others. The following can place you at higher risk:

◆ **Insufficient Saliva** – Saliva helps to move bacteria out of the mouth. Some medications, age, or foods and beverages can cause a dry mouth.

◆ **Deep Pits & Grooves** – Back teeth, especially, have pits and grooves which can harbor bacteria. Some people have very deep pits, creating a warm, moist hideout ideal for bacteria growth.

◆ **High Sugar Diet** – Bacteria in your mouth thrive on refined sugar. This produces an acid that attacks enamel.

◆ **Exposed Tooth Roots** – Aging, overzealous brushing, or an improper bite can cause gums to pull away from teeth, exposing tooth roots. This distracts from your smile and increases the potential for decay to occur.

◆ **High Levels Of Bacteria** – We all have bacteria in our bodies; however, two kinds are especially harmful to teeth. Those with higher levels are naturally at greater risk for tooth decay.

Now that you know what "ups" your risk for cavities, here are some tips to help you prevent them in the first place ...

- ◆ Keep your mouth moist by drinking plenty of water. If you take medications that are drying, ask your doctor or pharmacist about alternatives that are less drying. Decrease alcohol, caffeine, and spicy foods. If you smoke, quit!
- ◆ Bacteria can be controlled with oral rinses containing chlorhexidine. A concentrated fluoride varnish can also be applied to teeth for added protection.
- ◆ Teeth with deep grooves and pits can be protected with sealants to cover these areas on a temporary basis. For extended protection, replacing fillings with inlays, onlays or crowns will shield the tooth.
- ◆ Watch what and how often you eat. Keep in mind that anytime you consume food or drinks (other than water), your mouth responds by producing acid, which attacks tooth enamel. The acid from refined sugar is most harmful.
- ◆ Be committed to home care. Twice daily brushing and flossing will help maintain healthy teeth and gums.

Your regular care visits at our office are designed to help you maintain a healthy mouth. We know your goal is to NOT have dental repairs to your teeth. We hope these tips will enhance your "no cavity" goals!