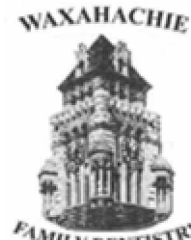


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## Dental News Bites

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### A NOTE FROM THE STAFF

It is our goal as a team to provide the utmost in quality patient care with integrity and professionalism.

Our patients are our number one priority and we are committed to exceeding your expectations.

We want to communicate clearly so that you have all of the information you need to make informative decisions about your dental care. An individualized treatment plan will be developed to help you achieve a healthy smile.

New patients are always welcome and we hope that your experience with us will leave you eager to recommend us to your family, friends and neighbors.



Back Row: Angie Sanchez, Elia Martinez, Abby Newhouse, Cynthia Guinn, LeeAnn Owens  
Front Row: Dr. Eddie Elliott, Dr. Scott Clinton, Cindy McDowra

## Neglecting Oral Health?

### Important Life-Threatening Risks You Need to Know

Americans rank a bright white smile as one of the most important aspects of an attractive appearance.

Yet adults in our country get a barely passing grade when it comes to taking care of their teeth.

According to the Academy of General Dentistry, almost 60 percent of Americans don't even have a dentist.

The fallout: Our poor oral-health report card means that diseases that start in the mouth have reached epidemic proportions, according to a report released by former surgeon general David Satcher, M.D. "We're just beginning to understand how the mouth serves as a gateway to infections that can trigger a host of chronic

diseases, says Gordon L. Douglas, D.D.S., president of the American Academy of Periodontology (AAP).

That's why visiting a dentist regularly can be a lifesaver.

Excuses for neglecting oral health are predictable enough—people fear the pain, cost and the scary diagnosis they might hear precisely because they've stayed away too long.

Periodontal disorders, which affect a third of America's adult population, start mildly enough, often with gingivitis, an easily reversible condition caused by bacteria-laden plaque, with symptoms that include swollen, tender and bleeding gums. Gingivitis, if left untreated, spreads to threaten

much more than your mouth: Full-blown periodontal disease can contribute to the blood clotting that causes heart attacks and strokes; it's also linked to the onset of type 2 diabetes, and chronic bronchitis.

In the case of diabetes, the chain reaction seems to start with bacteria entering the bloodstream, where they cause immune cells to produce high levels of substances that can damage the cells responsible for insulin production.

When it comes to heart disease, bacteria and their byproducts cause inflammation in the arteries, which may significantly contribute to blockages.

As with chronic bronchitis and

emphysema, research suggests that bacteria in the mouth travel via inhalation to lodge in lung tissue, making the existing disease worse. People with family histories of these diseases are at the highest risk—but only after the underlying periodontal disorder is full-blown are the chain reactions triggered.

The bottom line, according to the AAP: Three easy oral-health habits—twice-daily brushing, daily flossing and twice-annual dental check-ups, including tooth cleaning—stop gingivitis before it can progress.

Establishing these routine and low-cost habits can eliminate the need for the enormously expensive restorative work that's typically required later in life if oral health has been neglected.

## KIDS! ENTER FOR A CHANCE TO WIN AN IPOD!



Decorate a snowman and enter our contest for a chance to win an IPOD! Our office will supply the necessary styrofoam shapes to form the snowman's body, but we need you to decorate the shapes. Be creative! We will have our patients vote for their favorite during their office visit. The winner of the contest will be announced at the end of winter!

### Rules:

1. Patient MUST be 12 years of age or younger.
2. Snowmen must be at our office no later than January 29th.



### SNOWMEN COOKIES

#### INGREDIENTS:

1 PACKAGE (18 OUNCES) REFRIGERATED CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE DOUGH

1 1/2 CUPS SIFTED POWDERED SUGAR

2 TABLESPOONS MILK

MISCELLANEOUS TYPES OF CANDY

(CHOCOLATE CHIPS, LICORICE AND OTHER ASSORTED SMALL CANDIES)

#### PREPARATION:

1. PREHEAT OVEN TO 375°F. CUT DOUGH INTO 12 EQUAL SECTIONS. DIVIDE EACH SECTION INTO 3 BALLS: SMALL, MEDIUM, AND LARGE. FOR EACH SNOWMAN, PLACE 1 EACH SMALL, MEDIUM AND LARGE 1/4 INCH APART ON AN UNGREASED COOKIE SHEET.
2. BAKE 10 TO 12 MINUTES OR UNTIL EDGES ARE VERY LIGHTLY BROWNED. COOL 4 MINUTES ON COOKIE SHEETS.
3. MIX POWDERED SUGAR AND MILK IN MEDIUM BOWL UNTIL SMOOTH. POUR GLAZE EVENLY OVER THE COOKIES. LET STAND 20 MINUTES OR UNTIL SET. THEN, DECORATE WITH ASSORTED CANDIES TO CREATE SCARVES, HATS, ETC.

## FEED THE HUNGRY: WIN FREE EXAM & X-RAYS

Supporting our community is extremely important to our staff at Waxahachie Family Dentistry. We need your help to help others by providing food for our community. We will be accepting your non-perishable food donations for the Ellis County Food Bank (CARE), and in return, enter your name into our drawing for a chance to win a Free Exam and X-rays! Please contact us for a list of requested items. It would be a blessing to see the shelves stocked full! Thank you for your support!



## Cracked tooth syndrome: Do you have pain or sensitivity?

Some teeth have cracks that are too small to show up on x-rays. Sometimes the cracks are under the gum. These small cracks are known as "cracked tooth syndrome."

Cracked tooth syndrome is most common in lower back teeth (molars). That's because these teeth absorb most of the forces of chewing.

Some people grind or clench their teeth. These people may be more likely to have cracked tooth syndrome. Sometimes, the way a person's teeth come together can

put too much pressure on one tooth. This can cause the teeth to crack.

Teeth with large fillings may be more likely to crack. Teeth that have undergone root canal treatment are weaker than other teeth and also may be more likely to crack. People with one cracked tooth are more likely to have others, either at the same time or in the future.

Sometimes a crack affects one or more cusps of a tooth. These are the highest points of the tooth.

In this case, the tooth may be fixed with a crown.

Some cracks affect the pulp: the center of the tooth, where the nerves and blood vessels are. In that case, the tooth will need root canal treatment.

About 20% of teeth with cracked tooth syndrome will need root canals. After a root canal, the tooth will no longer be sensitive to temperature, but it still will respond to pressure.

In some cases, the tooth may need to be removed. Some cracks affect the root of the tooth in the jaw.

There's no way to fix this type of crack. If your tooth is removed, you can have it replaced with an implant or a bridge.

Your dentist can make a night guard (a plastic bite piece) to prevent you from grinding your teeth. This will relieve the pain

from grinding. For some people it can stop tooth sensitivity.

If you grind or clench your teeth, talk to your dentist about treatment. Grinding can increase your risk of cracked tooth syndrome.

When you feel pain during biting or chewing, contact our office.

### Cracked Tooth Symptoms (CTS)

- ◆ You find yourself chewing only on one side of your mouth because the other side is uncomfortable.
- ◆ Your teeth are sensitive to hot or cold, or sweet or sour foods.
- ◆ You feel sharp pain when you bite down.
- ◆ The pain you feel is not constant but varies.

### Situations that contribute to CTS

- ◆ Tooth grinding or uneven chewing pressures.
- ◆ Loss of tooth structure from a large cavity, filling or other restoration.
- ◆ Temperature extremes such as eating hot food and then drinking ice water.
- ◆ Chewing on hard objects or foods such as ice, nuts or hard candy.