

DENTAL NEWS

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HOLIDAY CHEER

It looks like that time of the year is upon us.

Yule tides, christmas trees, caroling, christmas shows and remembering good friends. A week later we will be ringing in a new year, making resolutions and pausing to see where we have been this year and imagining what 1991 will bring. It has been a very busy year for me, many changes have occurred and many more will take place in 1991. I would like to thank you for your trust and confidence. Again, Merry Christmas to you and a very happy New Year.

This particular news letter is at least a month behind. My NEW YEAR RESOLUTION will be to try to get this out on time. Thank you for the feed back from the last newsletter. I found it very enlightening. Take care, floss well, and stay healthy.

TOOTH BRUSHES

Many people have asked me which tooth brush is the best. The best tooth brush is the one you use. I agree with the American Dental Association that a soft bristle brush is best since it limits the amount of abrasive damage to the gums and the root of the tooth. I use a soft bristled brush called Reach. I happen to like Reach because the head is small and bent at an angle which allows me to get behind my teeth and around my third molars (an almost impossible place to get to). The bottom line to good oral hygiene (the recipe for keeping your teeth) is to brush as often as possible, ideally after every meal, and to have a dental check-up and tartar removal, usually every 6 months. Think of the dental check-up and cleaning like getting the oil changed in your car every 5000 miles. The more often you change the oil in your car the longer the engine will probably last. Of course if you abuse the motor, no matter how careful your maintenance, your car will not last very long. Your teeth are the same, ignore and abuse

them long enough and you will no longer have teeth. Instead you will own two uncomfortable chunks of plastic, called dentures, to chew with. Not everyone can avoid dentures but they should be the treatment of very last resort.

MOUTH RINSES

Most of what you hear and see about mouth rinses is hype and nothing more. Personally I use an inexpensive brand of mouthwash, and only to freshen my breath. Do try to use products that have the American Dental Association seal of approval. That way you know that the rinse was rigorously tested and shown to be safe and effective. Yes, some of the plaque removal products actually remove some plaque but your toothbrush and regular check-ups will do a lot more good than their rinse. There are two rinses on the market that actually work as advertised, kill bugs and help eliminate periodontal disease. The first is Listerine. It doesn't kill all the bugs and not even all the bugs that cause periodontal disease, but at least it kills a lot of bugs. Personally I don't use Listerine because I brush my teeth well. But of the over the counter rinses it is one of the best. The second rinse is something called Peridex. It is by prescription only in this country and over the counter in Europe. Peridex not only kills lots of bugs of all types. It is the only currently available rinse that actually reduces -or- eliminates periodontal disease. But, it does have one minor side effect--after steady use it will discolor your teeth. The amount of staining will vary from person to person and can be removed by a regular cleaning. If you are extra careful in your home care you can minimize Peridex's staining effect. If I needed a rinse for gum disease this is the only one shown to really work. The rest of the mouth washes are great if you like the taste. But, realize that all they really do for you is improve your breath and little else.