



Comfort Dental Family News

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Our Motto:

"Comfort Dental Care" is our philosophy. With us you aren't just another number. That's because we don't just treat teeth and gums, we treat people."

What has changed:

➤ We are excited to announce that we are now performing CERAC® restorations. Please refer to the previous newsletter for more information.

➤ Our comfort dental family is growing in wonderful patients, dedicated team members and babies. We would like to congratulate our dental hygienist Alissa and dental assistant Cayce on their baby boys Samuel and William Curey.

➤ It is our goal to provide you and your family with exceptional dental care. For this reason we need your feedback. If you could fill out the green evaluation forms available at the front desk after your appointment, it will be greatly appreciated.

➤ In an effort to keep up with technology in addition to phone confirmations, we have decided to start sending out appointment reminders through email. Please make sure to update your email address in our records so that you too can take advantage of the extra reminders.



Here at Comfort Dental Care we have been very busy making the dental experience a better one for you and your family. There have been many changes in our office since the last issue and we apologize for the *slight* delay, but hopefully you can continue to stay educated and informed through our newsletter. Again, if you have any feedback or even future story ideas please feel free to e-mail us at newsletter@comfortdental.net.

Breaking Bruxism

With increasingly busy lives and hectic schedules, stress has become a regular part of the lives of many. Stress can cause numerous health problems when not dealt with properly and your mouth is no exception.

About 15 percent of people have a habit of clenching their jaws or grinding their teeth called Bruxism. This usually happens when people are asleep and therefore goes virtually undetected until a family member hears the grinding sound or a dentist notices the symptoms.

These symptoms include teeth that look flat on the tips, abnormal alignment of teeth, jaw pain, headache or earache, a frequent contracting of muscles of the side of the face and of course teeth grinding during sleep.

Although stress is not the only cause of Bruxism, it is a leading component. In some cases, grinding occurs because the top and bottom teeth are misaligned. It may also be a response to pain, such as an earache, or result of a sleep disorder. Alcohol and caffeine can worsen this condition by causing the grinding or clenching to be more severe.

In many cases, Bruxism doesn't cause any damage, but if left untreated severe grinding can lead to numerous dental problems.

Teeth grinding or jaw clenching can wear down teeth enamel and lead to chipped teeth. In addition, it can erode gums and supporting bones, break fillings or other dental work, increase temperature sensitivity or even worsen temporomandibular joint (TMJ) dysfunction. Due to the extensive damage that Bruxism can lead to, it is important to detect this problem early on so the proper steps can be taken to end this bad habit.

Replacing old restorations or filling down a high surface can change the bite and help eliminate pressure. However, when Bruxism is serious enough to damage the teeth or cause jaw or facial pain, we can fit patients with custom-made plastic mouth guards to be worn at night. If these symptoms pertain to you, ask us today how you too can be on your way to breaking Bruxism.

Welcoming New Smiles

Please help us welcome (pictured from left to right) dental assistant Claudia, hygienist Theresa and front desk receptionist Michelle to the Comfort Dental family.



Night guard fast facts

➤ What is a night guard?

A night guard is a thin, custom-made, transparent horseshoe-shaped (retainer like appliance) made of hard plastic that has shallow borders for good tooth alignment and ideal bite relationship.

➤ Why use a night guard?

A night guard takes the punishment that your teeth would normally have to endure during Bruxism in order to minimize the damage caused by grinding your teeth. This splint is worn between the top and bottom teeth preventing the teeth from interlocking and therefore absorbing the force of the clenching and grinding to reduce joint irritation and inflammation.

We're very pleased to announce our new association with Dr. Dan Harmon. Dr. Harmon comes to us with impressive credentials.

Dr. Harmon graduated from Tufts School of Dental Medicine, Boston, MA in 1978. He entered a General Practice Residency to gain additional training and expertise in all aspects of dentistry. He especially enjoys esthetic/cosmetic dentistry and fully incorporates this, and other specialty areas into his normal procedures.

Dr. Harmon has received many awards and honors as a member of the military for over 26 years including: Outstanding Dental Officer of the Year, Outstanding Reserve Officer of the Year, various commendations/medals and the Tactical Air Command "Real Pro" Award for his service while deployed for Desert Storm. He attained the rank of colonel and has served as the commander of a 100-member medical squadron.

Dr. Harmon has taken hundreds of hours in additional clinical continuing education courses and has also earned an M.B.A. from Rockhurst University while continuing his dental practice. He has volunteered locally and abroad. He serves in a variety of ways at his local church, often with his wife who is the Children's Pastor. But he concedes that his greatest title is just "Dad" to his two, now married, girls and their husbands, and he plans on being a pretty good grandpa. We're happy to have another committed professional in the practice!



Important Updates

- If you are unable to keep your appointment please inform us at least 48 hours before the scheduled time. This will allow us the opportunity to provide care more effectively.
- Our office does not perform amalgam restorations, except in rare cases, as we believe they are not a good choice for your long term dental health. Some insurance companies only cover amalgam restorations which are slightly less expensive. If this is the case then the patient will be responsible for the difference.



Fluoride: Friend or Foe

Even with the numerous advancements in dental technology these days, the age old question still stands: is fluoride a friend or a foe. In order to tackle such a dilemma, it's important to start with the basics.

Tooth decay is caused by acid-producing bacteria which gather around the teeth and gums in a sticky clear film called plaque. In order to avoid such decay it is necessary to take the proper precautions by maintaining good daily oral hygiene as well as frequenting the dental office on a regular basis. Fluoride, a mineral that helps prevent tooth decay and helps repair teeth in the very early, microscopic stages of the disease, is a key component to the regular cleaning appointments.

Fluoride can be obtained in two forms: topical and systematic. Topical fluorides include fluoride toothpastes

mouthwashes and professional fluoride treatment which are applied directly to the tooth enamel. Systematic fluorides are those that are swallowed such as fluoridated water and dietary fluoride supplements. The maximum reduction in tooth decay is achieved when fluoride is taken both topically and systematically.

Here at Comfort Dental Care we feel that prevention is key. Therefore we encourage many of our patients to use fluoride on a daily basis in order to achieve a healthier smile, maintain dental restorations and prevent sensitivity.

However be aware that fluoride is not for everyone because for some too much of a good thing can cause a rare condition called Fluorosis which results in teeth discoloration. Ask us today how fluoride can be your friend.

