

Stobbe Family Dentistry & Orthodontics



The Best Dental Insurance There Is:

prevention

As dentists, every patient we have has at one time or another asked the question – “What’s the best dental insurance to get?” Well, dental coverage is a good thing, to be sure and if you are lucky to have dental insurance as part of your employee dental package; you are fortunate. However – here’s the real deal: nothing equals preventative care, when it comes to keeping your teeth and gums healthy on a budget. Without a doubt, the best insurance for tomorrow, is paying attention to your dental care today.

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Good dental care starts at home and is a habit worth cultivating. Our teeth are supposed to last throughout our lives. Good dental hygiene is at the center of so many health issues that can affect our health. Your teeth are key in being able to eat a variety of foods required to keep our bodies healthy. Gum diseases can cause all sorts of health disorders. In addition, healthy teeth and gums are dramatically

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Another Reason to Floss: Your Heart

Not only does flossing your teeth create a cleaner mouth, it can protect your heart as well! What is the connection between the two? It is the bacteria in the plaque that coats your teeth and in between that affects your heart. Without daily flossing, the plaque builds up, and may cause periodontal disease (gum disease). Gum disease can enter the bloodstream, which in turn contributes to narrowed arteries and blood clots, which ultimately lead to heart attacks.

According to current research, excessive oral bacteria created a 300 percent greater risk of heart attack, than people with minimal or no bacteria. It is clear that oral health is very important and can influence other health factors. Dental professionals have provided three tips, to maintain a mouth with minimal to no oral bacteria.

1. Have an oral examination- while visiting the dentist, don't just ask about the cavities. It is important to be aware of your plaque accumulation and how successful you are at removing the plaque.
2. Ask for flossing feedback-while flossing can be occurring daily, you may not be flossing effectively. If plaque buildup is still occurring, learn a different flossing technique that is more effective.
3. Buy effective products-your oral care products shouldn't be based around advertising. Ask your dental professional for recommended products that will effectively eliminate plaque.

Swimmers and Their Not So White Smiles...

According to the Academy of General Dentistry, competitive swimmers may be at risk for developing yellowish-brown or dark-brown stains on their teeth.

Athlete swimmers, who often swim laps more than six hours a week, expose their teeth to large amounts of chemically-treated water. Pool water contains chemical additives like antimicrobials, which gives the water a higher pH than saliva. While chemical additives to pool water keeps us safe from bacteria that can cause illness, they also wreck havoc with the natural proteins in our saliva, which in turn chemically alters the saliva and causes dark colored tartar to form on the teeth. This condition is well known to dentists, who refer to it as "swimmer's teeth, although the real name is "Swimmer's Calculus."

Swimmers who notice stains on their teeth should talk to their dentist and increase their dental visits to three or four times a year. This condition requires a professional cleaning from a trained dental hygienist, as it doesn't respond well to over-the-counter tartar control toothpastes. In fact, over use of products like this can do more harm than good, because overuse of tartar control pastes can lead to irritation and inflammation of the gums.

While these dark deposits are cosmetically undesirable – they are not permanent and regular visits to our office can restore your smile in short order.



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TMJ

On the Rise

TMJ, also known as myofascial pain dysfunction is a troublesome and sometimes chronic condition that affects an estimated 40 million people in the U.S. While TMJ disorders are a group of complex problems of the jaw joint, dental conditions if not the root cause, significantly aggravate this condition – which is why treatment is most often provided by a dentist that specializes in TMJ.

What Causes TMJ Disorders?

The following are behaviors or conditions that can lead to TMJ disorders:

1. Teeth grinding and teeth clenching (bruxism) increase the wear on the cartilage lining of the TMJ. Those who grind or clench their teeth may be unaware of this behavior unless they are told by someone observing this pattern while sleeping or by a dental professional noticing telltale signs of wear and tear on the teeth. Many patients awaken in the morning with jaw or ear pain.
2. Habitual gum chewing or fingernail biting
3. Dental problems and misalignment of the teeth (malocclusion). Patients may complain that it is difficult to find a comfortable bite or that the way their teeth fit together has changed. Chewing on only one side of the jaw can lead to or be a result of TMJ problems.
4. Trauma to the jaws. Previous fractures in the jaw or facial bones can lead to TMJ disorders.
5. Stress frequently leads to unreleased nervous energy. It is very common for people under stress to release this nervous energy by either consciously or unconsciously grinding or clenching their teeth. Interestingly enough, as our lives become increasingly stressful, the number of TMJ cases continues to rise.
6. Occupational tasks such as holding the telephone between the head and shoulder may contribute to TMJ disorders.

How Can I Tell If I Have a TMJ Disorder?

The temporomandibular joint (TMJ) is the area directly in front of the ear on either side of the head where the upper jaw (maxilla) and lower jaw (mandible) meet. Within the TMJ, there are moving parts that allow the upper jaw to close on the lower jaw. This joint is a typical sliding “ball and socket” that has a disc sandwiched between it. The TMJ is used throughout the day to move the jaw, especially in biting and chewing, talking, and yawning. It is one of the most frequently used joints of the body and also the most complex.

TMJ pain disorders usually occur because of unbalanced activity, spasm, or overuse of the jaw muscles. Symptoms tend to be chronic, and treatment is aimed at eliminating the precipitating factors. Many symptoms may not appear related to the TMJ itself. The following are common symptoms:

Headache: Approximately 80% of patients with a TMJ disorder complain of headache, and 40% report facial pain. Pain is often made worse while opening and closing the jaw. Exposure to cold weather or air-conditioned air may increase muscle contraction and facial pain.

EAR PAIN: About 50% of patients with a TMJ disorder notice ear pain and do not have signs of ear infection. The ear pain is usually described as being in front of or below the ear. Often, patients are treated multiple times for a presumed ear infection, which can often be distinguished from TMJ disorder by an associated hearing loss or ear drainage (which would be expected

if there really was an ear infection). Because ear pain occurs so commonly, ear specialists are frequently called on to make the diagnosis of a TMJ disorder.

SOUNDS: Grinding, crunching, or popping sounds, medically termed crepitus, are common for patients with a TMJ disorder. These sounds may or may not be accompanied by increased pain.

DIZZINESS: Of patients with a TMJ disorder, 40% report a vague sense of dizziness or imbalance (usually not a spinning type vertigo). The cause of this type of dizziness is not well understood.

FULLNESS OF THE EAR: About 33% of patients with a TMJ disorder describe muffled, clogged, or full ears. They may notice ear fullness and pain during airplane takeoffs and landings. These symptoms are usually caused by eustachian-tube dysfunction, the structure responsible for the regulation of pressure in the middle ear. It is thought that patients with TMJ disorders have hyperactivity (spasms) of the muscles responsible for regulating the opening and closing of the eustachian tube.

Ringling in the ear (tinnitus): For unknown reasons, 33% of patients with a TMJ disorder experience noise or ringing in the ears (tinnitus). Of those patients, half will have resolution of their tinnitus after successful treatment of their TMJ disorder.

There are various treatments for TMJ disorders and if you or one of our family members shows symptoms of TMJ; we urge you to contact our office immediately. Dr. Stobbe specializes in the treatment of TMJ. Treatment may include medications for pain, muscle relaxation, bite plates and splint therapy. In more severe cases surgery is also an option. Treatment times vary from 3 weeks to 6 months, depending upon the severity. However, the quality of your life is greatly affected by this condition – so call us today, if you are experiencing pain.



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affect us cosmetically as well. When your teeth and gums are healthy – your overall sense of well-being is improved.

So, what are the basics of good dental care?

Daily dental health care such as brushing the teeth properly as well as flossing them generally help in preventing dental health problems from occurring. And if they do occur, the conditions are much milder, and hence are less painful and expensive to treat.

Apart from visiting the dentist regularly, there are some simple dental health care practices that we can incorporate in our daily lives which can help to reduce the chances of developing dental problems like cavities in the teeth and gum disease:

- Brushing the teeth twice a day as well as flossing everyday.
- Using toothpaste and other dental products containing fluoride, after consulting your dentist.
- Using a mouth rinse containing fluoride, after consulting your dentist.
- Avoiding snacking between meals, and consuming a well-balanced diet.
- Rinsing the mouth thoroughly after meals.



Our practice grows from referrals from our valued patients. We thank you for referring your family and friends to our office.

Free Exam

for TMJ and initial consultation for orthodontics

Stobbe Family Dentistry & Orthodontics

Orthodontics * Facial Pain & TMJ Treatment * General Dentistry

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