

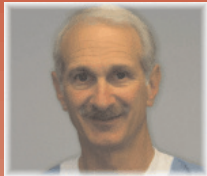
Oral Health News

A Newsletter from The Center for Oral Health

February, 2010

From The Editor

In this issue of Oral Health News, I'll discuss the role periodontics plays in relation to facial esthetics. I also was able to sit down with Josephine and ask her a few questions about what led her to a career in dental hygiene.



Robert A. Hersh DDS

NEXT ISSUE:

The link between periodontal disease and diabetes has been recognized for many years. In the next issue of Oral Health News, this important link will be examined, based on some recent advances in understanding this important topic.

A Beautiful Smile

Makes a face beautiful.

Attractiveness is a very complex concept. It varies culturally. It is, to a degree, subjective. And it is not easy to quantify. In the last fifty years, however, the science of esthetics has become increasingly important to many members of society. In 2006, for example, Americans spent approximately \$12.2 billion on medical and dental cosmetic procedures. An additional \$95 billion was spent on skin care, hair care and cosmetics. These kinds of expenditures suggest the current level of interest in esthetic improvements.

In the past twenty years, dentistry has also experienced a growing interest in facial esthetics. Balance, proportion, color, shape and size are just some of the current considerations in connection to the mouth, teeth and gums. A complete review of dental esthetics is beyond the scope of this brief article. It may be helpful, however to consider some of the elements involved in the relationship between esthetics and the gums.

In most people, the gums are typically described as "salmon pink" in color, although the color varies depending on race and pigmentation. The gum tissue typically forms a smooth hemispherical frame around the front of each tooth.



The gum tissue then forms a triangular extension between each tooth. Symmetry plays an important role in one's perception of pleasing esthetics. The gum heights on the two front teeth should be at equal levels. The gum heights of each of the mirror image front teeth should also be at equal levels. Teeth typically are rectangular in shape. They are longer than they are wide. When the gum fails to properly recede or if a front tooth or teeth are irregularly worn, they sometimes appear square instead of rectangular. Occasionally the gum on a particular tooth demonstrates extreme recession. This produces an unaesthetic imbalance, as well as creating a risk for tooth decay.

Some people have a very high lip position, most often during smiling. This creates a very "gummy smile." While the problem is often a lip inadequacy, the esthetics can often be improved, by repositioning the gum tissue higher on the upper front teeth to create less of a gummy display.

Some of the gum procedures designed to improve dental esthetics require a combination of periodontal and restorative treatments. Usually the gum procedure is performed prior to any final restorative treatment.

Dental esthetics is currently regarded as an important aspect of overall facial esthetics. If you have any questions in connection to the role your gums play in the esthetic scheme, please don't hesitate to contact us. Keep smiling!

the Center For ORAL HEALTH

Gum Care ■ Oral Medicine ■ Dental Implants

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Staff Corner

This month we are going to focus on Josephine. We sat down together, and I asked her a few questions.

Q: So, Josephine, how long have you been a dental hygienist?

Josephine: Wow. I can't believe it, but in July it will be 21 years. I was a dental assistant for 5 years prior - so I have been in dentistry for 26 years!

Q: What made you want to become a dental hygienist?

J: I had originally wanted to be a nurse. I began to take some Allied Health courses in high school, including a dental assisting class. It was my teacher, Mrs. Lichtenstein, who convinced me that the dental field was where I belonged.

Q: What was the first job you ever held?

J: When I was 15, I became a dental assistant. I had no prior experience. In fact, I didn't even know what dental floss was. When my father had something stuck between his teeth, he flossed with a matchbook cover!

Q: If you weren't a hygienist, what career would you most like to try?

J: Well, as I told you earlier, I wanted to become a nurse. However, now I think that if I hadn't found dentistry, I would most like to become an elementary school teacher.

Q: One last question. What piece of advise would you like to give all of your patients?

J: Make sure you floss and proxybrush. It's the best way to keep your mouth healthy and happy!



Center Stage

Cleanliness and sterility have always been important considerations at the Center for Oral Health. All instruments utilized are sterilized according to prescribed protocols. All touchable surfaces are decontaminated between patients and non-sterilizable surfaces, such as light handles are covered with plastic liners.

Our goal is to provide each patient with the safest clinical environment in which to receive care. If you ever detect a breach in our office cleanliness, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Onto another matter, many patients have found music to be soothing while undergoing dental treatments. It may not be a bad idea to bring your iPod or other music device with you so that you may hear the music of your choice.

The Center for Oral Health provides a number of specialized services. **Periodontal Therapy** deals with the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the gums and supporting bone. **Dental Implants** involve the

placement of titanium anchors into the jaw to replace missing teeth. **Oral Medicine** is the diagnosis and treatment of conditions of the mouth and surrounding structures which have a medical link.

Have a question? Email us at oralhealth@optonline.net