

# Dental Health News

Compliments of Dr. Brian P. Del Carlo

## News from the office of:



**Dr. Brian P. Del Carlo**

We hope you enjoy this latest update from our office.

Our dental newsletter provides important information on the link between your oral health and your overall health. Have a look at the health and nutrition tips inside, along with a dental warning on some "fast" foods – energy bars and drinks – popular with today's teens.

Through this newsletter, we also like to provide you with an overview of all the services we offer here at your dental office. If you have any concerns at all about your dental health, or have any questions about cosmetic dentistry options, please be sure to give us a call.

Enjoy the warm weather, we look forward to seeing you soon!

Smile strong, white and bright!

*Brian P. Del Carlo*

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## JOB HUNTING? Let Your Smile Open Up the Doors!

Today's economic conditions have resulted in a rising number of workers looking for new employment. This means more job applicants are applying to the few companies that are hiring, and those applicants need to find a way to make themselves stand out from the competition. Why not start with a healthy, confident smile?



Both men and women need to be aware of the impressive impact a nice smile has. Studies have proven the right smile can make a person look more interesting, intelligent, successful and wealthy to others. However, in this economy many households are tightening their budgets, and are looking to cut down on what they consider to be unnecessary services. It's important to remember to not put dental care in this category, as cancelled dental visits can easily result in overlooked dental health issues that could end up costing you more money in the long run.

Today's science also indicates overall health can be linked to oral health in some cases. For example, the American Academy of Periodontology linked infections in the mouth to a host of other seemingly unrelated problems like diabetes, heart disease and other medical issues in some people. Thorough dental

checkups are an essential part of preventive health maintenance, and a healthy worker is the most sought-after type of worker. Don't wait until something hurts; if you haven't already scheduled your next dental checkup, please call us today.

Remember too, when job hunting, it simply makes sense to present yourself in a well-groomed manner. Practice your winning smile in the mirror. Broken or missing teeth certainly need to be addressed, and if your teeth look stained or yellow, consider having them whitened. Fixing your smile can be a simple process, but an important one that could give you a subtle edge over another person who's vying for the same position.

It's a fact that a healthy, white smile is equated with a more youthful look — always an advantage in today's competitive job environment. Let us help you get the professional edge with a confident, winning smile!

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# THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UNLIKELY

Almost everything you consume affects your teeth or mouth in one way or another. Here are a few of the more common foods and vitamins you should pay special attention to.

## THE GOOD:

Because calcium is the chief supportive element in bones and teeth, it's important to get enough of this mineral in your daily diet. Even if you don't like milk, remember that cheese, yogurt, almonds, leafy green vegetables, broccoli, beans and tofu are also great sources of calcium. Have a look in your grocery store's juice aisle for calcium-enriched juices too, and remember to include vitamin D in your diet: It helps to absorb any calcium you consume.

Iron, found in such sources as red meat, liver, egg yolks and bran cereal, is important in preventing sores from forming in your mouth, and your tongue from becoming inflamed.

A lack of vitamin B3 (found in chicken and fish) can cause bad breath and canker sores, while mouth sores can also develop in those who don't consume enough vitamin B12 and B2.

We often think of vitamin C to fight a cold, but did you know a lack of this important vitamin can lead to bleeding gums and loose teeth? Oranges, raw, red peppers and sweet potatoes are delicious sources of vitamin C.

## THE BAD:

We know smoking, and consuming an abundance of certain berries, coffee, tea, red wine and other staining foods and drinks can affect the color of our teeth, but there are a number of other common things we consume on a daily basis that can also adversely affect our teeth.

For example, apple juice sounds healthier than soda pop, but did you know it can have more sugar than soda? All acidic drinks — including regular and diet soda pop,

sports drinks and fruit juices — can pose another threat to teeth: "Dental erosion", the loss of the protective enamel on your teeth. By sipping on acidic drinks over a long period of time, you are continually bathing the teeth in acid. Try to finish drinking these beverages within a few minutes instead of sipping them throughout a longer period, and if possible, rinse your mouth out with plain water after finishing your drink to help to wash away any remaining sugar and acid.

Also remember, teeth are not tools, and should therefore not be used to open bottles, tear away packaging or gnaw on pens. Avoid chewing on ice too — You can crack your teeth!

## THE UNLIKELY:

Carbohydrates: Did you know carbohydrates can be just as bad for teeth as candy? The reason is bacteria feed on leftover foods, often carbohydrates, in the mouth and produce acid, which causes decay.

Hidden Sugars: Watch out for sugars in unlikely places, like cough syrup, and sugars that appear naturally in many foods — even milk! We recommend that parents don't put their babies to sleep with a bottle of milk, because as milk pools in a child's mouth, the sugars mix with bacteria in the mouth to make a mild acid, which can then attack the tooth enamel to produce cavities.

Finally, you may think that all gum and candy are frowned upon by dentists, but sometimes candy can be dandy, especially in the form of sugarless gum. In fact, because gum stimulates the creation of saliva in the mouth, many dentists recommend chewing on a piece of sugarless gum after a meal if you can't brush right away.

Talk to us about the important connection between what you put in your mouth, and your good dental and overall health.



# TOOTH TROUBLE IN TODAY'S TEENS



Today's teenagers are busier than ever before, with school, part-time jobs and a plethora of extra-curricular activities competing for their time. Marketers, aware of time-stressed lifestyles stemming from these busy schedules, have created a number of products promoted to fill dietary requirements, in the form of energy drinks and "nutrition" bars. Unfortunately, these products not only don't fill all of a growing teen's nutritional needs, they can also be harmful to their teeth and overall health.

Energy bars and nutritional bars are promoted as a convenient way to fill the void left by those with little time for a complete meal during the day. While various bars contain different ingredients, the one thing many have in common is their gooey texture, which allows sugar to cling to the crevasses of teeth until it is brushed or rinsed away. Once the sticky, sugary product finds its way between or behind your teeth, it encourages plaque, a sticky, clear

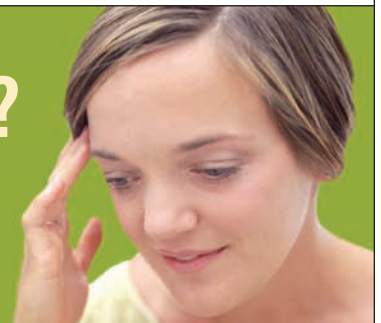
coating of bacteria, to form on your teeth, feeding off the sugar. This produces an acid that immediately attacks the teeth. Continued attacks can cause the enamel on the teeth to break down, eventually leading to tooth decay.

Sports and energy drinks are growing in popularity not only with athletes, but also with people who just want some extra "oomph" in their day. However, the effects of these beverages are proving to be more damaging to teeth than even soda pop. In fact, frequent consumption of energy and sports drinks results in the strongest potential for the erosion of teeth enamel, the thin, protective outer layer of the tooth that helps maintain its structure and shape.

It's important to make sure you make the time — no matter how busy you and your children are — to maintain your dental checkups, as once tooth erosion starts, it will cost you more money, comfort and effort to fix.

## ALLERGIC TO THE DENTAL OFFICE?

**As much as some patients may like to joke that they are "allergic" to dental appointments, the truth is there are people who may have actual allergies to some common materials used at a dental office.**



According to the Academy of General Dentistry, materials such as latex, commonly used in dental gloves, masks and syringes, or medications such as local anesthetics, have been known to result in allergic reactions in some patients.

Natural rubber latex is derived from a substance found in rubber trees, and some people are hypersensitive to those proteins. If you know you're allergic to latex, please be sure to let us know: Remember to mark it on your medical history form, and double check with us when you arrive for your appointment to ensure we use latex-free gloves.

If you have previously experienced a reaction to certain metals — if a piece of jewelry has irritated your skin in the past, for instance — you will also want to let us know of

this sensitivity, as some dental crowns, veneers, inlays or dentures may have nickel, chromium-containing materials or other metals in them. Knowing of your sensitivity to metals ahead of time will allow us to provide more compatible dental materials for you.

Please don't avoid our office because of any allergies to materials we may use. It's important to maintain your regular continuing-care appointments to ensure optimum oral health. Simply advise us of any allergies or sensitivities you have, and we will work with you to provide a safe environment for all your dental needs.



## THE LAST STRAW

In many cases tooth decay initiates, not because of what type of food you put in your mouth, but because of the length of time a food or beverage is in contact with your teeth. After having a meal, snack or drink, the bacteria in plaque release acids that attack the enamel surfaces of your teeth. Repeated acid attacks increasingly erode the enamel, eventually causing tooth decay and cavities. That's why we suggest indulging in drinks (besides water) and sugary or acidic foods in one sitting, instead of snacking on or sipping them throughout the day.

If you can't break your habit of sipping the occasional beverage over a longer period of time, you may want to consider drinking through a straw, positioned towards the back of the mouth. This allows the drink to avoid as much contact as possible with your teeth, and therefore minimize the risk of not only cavities, but also staining on your front teeth.

Of course, even when drinking through a straw, your back teeth will still be bathed with sugary and acidic liquids, so it's always wise to rinse your mouth out with water when you finish your drink. Don't brush your teeth right after though — wait at least 30 minutes after finishing your drink to brush, to allow softened tooth enamel to re-harden and avoid any damage caused by the toothbrush.

## WE WELCOME NEW PATIENTS!

The best compliment we can receive from our patients is the referral of your friends, colleagues and family members. In fact, referrals and word-of-mouth recommendations are our number one source for new patients, so if you know someone who's looking for a new dentist, we would very much appreciate your passing our information on to them.

Our extensive dental training and experience allows us to understand and treat a wide range of oral health needs, from preventing dental disease to patient education, and treatments using modern dental techniques and technology.

Whether you or your friends are looking to maintain a healthy smile, or to create a perfect smile with cosmetic options, we are always happy to give you all the information you need to make informed and confident decisions.

Thank you for your confidence in our services, and for sending your friends, family and colleagues our way!



## 39 Years Serving Downers Grove!

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Wednesday Closed  
Thursday 8am - 3pm  
Friday 8am - 6pm  
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**Dr. Del Carlo**

**Dr. Steven Oltean**, Board Certified Diplomate, Oral Surgery

**Dr. Ray Sanai**, Board Certified Diplomate Periodontics

**General Dentist Providing:**

- Gentle Teeth Cleaning • Laser Dentistry • Cosmetic Dentistry
- Teeth Whitening • Orthodontic Care • Dental Implants • Root Canal Therapy

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