



# Something

*To Smile About*

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Produced for the Patients of Dr. Jon C. Ellison

## *Dental X-Rays and Thyroid Cancer*

It is really incredible how much influence that a popular show such as Oprah can have on their audience. Dr. Mehmet Oz recently said that thyroid cancer was "the fastest growing cancer in women," and cited the harmful effects of radiation from sources like dental x-rays and mammograms.

Here are some facts for you to consider. X-rays are one type of radiation which is absorbed by our tissues as it passes through them. Small amounts of radiation absorbed by the tissues have not been shown to cause harm, but large amounts with prolonged exposure can cause tissue changes such as cell death, mutation, and cancer.

The numbers of thyroid cancers diagnosed have increased a lot in recent years. Dr. Otis W. Bradley, chief medical officer of the American Cancer Society, said in an interview, "our technology has gotten so good that we are finding cancers today that even 15 years ago would not have been diagnosed." The increase in the cancer rate is due to improved cancer detection and not from a higher number of cancers developing.

Modern dental offices use digital radiography (we installed ours 12 years ago) which reduces the level of radiation exposure 60 – 90% when compared to conventional film. It has been calculated that it would take 50 full series of x-rays with a digital sensor, to equal the amount of radiation the average citizen picks up from naturally occurring background sources each year.

Dental x-rays are a fundamental necessity for preserving your dental health and detecting dental disease. If you are still concerned about this issue, please request that we use a special leaded thyroid protection collar in conjunction with the usual lead apron. Please be assured your health and safety are of primary concern to us.



Dr. Jon Ellison

## Eat For A Beautiful Smile

You brush, you floss (maybe not daily, but trying, right?), you see your dentist, but do you eat with your oral health in mind?

We all know that good nutrition is paramount for the health of our bodies, but the foods we eat also affect our teeth and gums. It's not just the usual suspects, like sugar, that may be harmful. Some surprising --even healthy-- foods can cause cavities, while others can help protect you from decay, gum disease, and bad breath.

### Eat Carbs With Meals

A handful of potato chips can be just as damaging to our teeth and gums as a chocolate chip cookie. All carbohydrates are broken down into simple sugars, which the bacteria in our mouth convert into plaque, the sticky film that grows on our teeth. Carb-based foods, like breads and crackers, have a sticky, adhesive texture, making them easier to get stuck between teeth and under gums where bacteria live. By eating carbs with meals, rather than as snacks, we are producing more saliva which break down and wash away food particles.

### Drink Tea

Black and green teas contain polyphenols, antioxidant plant compounds that prevent plaque bacteria from adhering to teeth, reducing the chance of decay and gum disease. Tea can also reduce the potential for bad breath because it inhibits the growth of the bacteria that causes it.

### Sip Through A Straw

Most sodas, sport drinks and fruit juices contain acids that can erode tooth enamel, even the diet or sugar free versions. Sipping acidic drinks through a straw, positioned at the back of the mouth, limits contact with the teeth, helping to preserve the enamel.

We would like to introduce Karla, the newest member of our team. Karla has worked in the dental field since 1998 and graduated from Dental Hygiene in 2009. She is a very bright and enthusiastic person and a wonderful addition to the practice. Welcome Karla.



### Increase Your Vitamin C Intake

Vitamin C is vital for the health of all our cells, including gum tissues. People who consume less than 60 mg of C per day (an 8 oz glass of orange juice contains more than 80 mg) are 25% more likely to have gum disease than those whose intake exceeds 150mg.

### Calcium

People who eat more than 800mg of calcium are less likely to develop severe gum disease. The reason: about 99% of the calcium in our bodies is in our bones and teeth. Dietary calcium- like that available in milk, cheese, and yogurt-- strengthens the alveolar bone of the jaws, which helps hold our teeth in place. The recommended daily dose of calcium is 1000mg for women under age 50, and 1200mg for those over.

A few simple changes to our dietary habits can help keep our teeth and gums healthy for life.

Tracey Marencik, R.D.H.

### Did You Know?

32% of Americans cite bad breath as the least attractive trait of their co-workers. (not in our office)!

You are supposed to replace your tooth brush after an episode of the flu, cold, or other viral infection. Microbes can implant themselves in the bristles leading to re-infection.