

Branching Out



HOLIDAY SEASON *Is No Picnic for* TEETH

The end of October through the first of the new year represents a tough two months for teeth, as sugary desserts and sweets become more prominent. Halloween gatherings and the hard-earned spoils of trick-or-treating, Thanksgiving get-togethers, and Christmas parties scattered throughout December all up the sugar ante.

Nearly 30 percent of adults exhibit some signs of tooth decay. While it's likely that these same folks know which foods increase their risk of developing cavities, they may not realize that sweet and healthy alternatives exist.

For instance, naturally sweet berries, packed with healthy vitamins and antioxidants, are an excellent choice. Pair them with plain yogurt for a snack that is delicious and filling. Try a handful of nuts next time you reach for a snack. Nuts offer nutrients, antioxidants, and are high in fiber, among other healthful benefits. Reach for cheese, which comes in a variety of satisfying flavors, contains calcium, and is excellent for teeth and bone health. Cheese also contains a protein that helps strengthen teeth to prevent decay.

The holidays offer many unhealthy food temptations, but by making wise choices and limiting sugar intake, you can make those tough months a little easier on your teeth.



Dear Patients:

It certainly has been a challenging year. My thoughts and prayers go out to anyone who has been impacted by the coronavirus, personally or indirectly.

Thank you for continuing to trust our office with your dental care. I'd like to update you on our current office procedures. Infection control has always been a top priority for our practice. I am proud of my team and how we have adapted safety procedures for our patients and staff. Our office will continue to communicate with you before your appointment to ask some screening questions. You will be asked those same questions again when you arrive at our office. When you arrive at the office parking lot, we ask that you call the office to check in from your vehicle to keep our waiting room clear; you will then be directed with further instructions. Please arrive wearing a mask to enter the building and walk to the treatment room. We have hand sanitizer available throughout the office and ask that you use it upon arrival. Magazines and children's toys have been put away to allow for better sanitation, although new educational pamphlets are available upon request.

Next, I would like to introduce my new associate, **Dr. Chloe Mounayar**. Dr. Chloe received her Bachelor of Science degree with honors in human biology, with minors in chemistry, anthropology, and communications and culture, from Indiana University Bloomington in 2016. She received her Doctor of Dental Surgery degree from Indiana University School of Dentistry in 2020. Dr. Chloe joined our staff in June. She has jumped in with both feet, full of excitement and knowledge. I am proud to have her as an addition to our staff. Read her "about me letter" (back page) to get to know her a little better.

If you have not rescheduled your appointment from when the office was closed, please call and make an appointment. We have extended hours to meet our patients' needs and allow for adequate social distancing between patients. Monday, 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. with Dr. Chloe; Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. with both Dr. Chloe and Dr. Fridh; and Friday by appointment only. Call the office at **219-326-7446**. Please, NO WALK-INS. Both Dr. Fridh and Dr. Chloe are taking new patients.

Lastly, I pray you and your families are safe and healthy. We look forward to seeing your smiling faces at the office. Even though we are all wearing masks, we can tell when our patients are happy.

— Dan

Produced for
the patients of
**Daniel W. Fridh,
D.D.S., M.A.G.D., and
Chloe Mounayar, D.D.S.**

1200 Andrew Avenue
La Porte, IN 46350

OFFICE STAFF

Patient Care Coordinators:

Patty Gangwer
Monica Mendoza
Linda Pinkstaff

Business Manager:

Ashley Fridh Stout

Dental Assistants:

Lindsay Gogel, EFDA, CDA
Bonnie Igelski, EFDA
Elaine James, EFDA

Dental Hygienists:

Jennie Alexander, LDH
Sharon Humphrey, LDH
Sharon Mullen, LDH

Office Hours

Mon.	9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.
Tues.	8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Wed.	8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Thurs.	8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Fri.	by appointment only

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We're a **TEAM!**

Regular dental examinations and cleanings are an essential piece of the oral-health puzzle. Excellent daily homecare — brushing twice per day and flossing daily — is crucial, too, as it provides the necessary maintenance to keep teeth healthy, but professional dental care complements good homecare in several key ways.

Regular dental checkups, at least every six months or as recommended by your dentist, can mean discovering decay in its earliest stages, when conservative treatment can be effective. If you need treatment, why not keep it simple ... and less expensive?

Gum disease, the number-one cause of tooth loss in adults, can be diagnosed early, while treatment can reverse the course of the infection and save teeth.

Maintaining good oral hygiene can also mean a more attractive smile and sweeter breath. Professional cleanings can reduce staining on teeth caused by drinking tea or coffee, or tobacco use. Removal of debris between teeth means a clean mouth that tastes and smells fresh.

While saving teeth and enjoying the benefits of a clean mouth are no doubt important, another reason to have regular dental checkups is to head off a potential killer at the pass: oral cancer. Oral cancer can often be treated successfully when it is diagnosed in its early stages. If it's allowed to develop undetected, its consequences can be devastating.

If it's time for a dental checkup, contact our office today.



Few Excuses for **NOT Flossing**

Shaky reasons for not flossing abound: teeth are packed too tightly, it's uncomfortable, too time-consuming, or just can't get the hang of it.

Hey, flossing isn't *always* easy. We understand that some people have physical limitations that make it untenable and may necessitate the assistance of a caretaker. However, most people *can* floss and therefore *should* floss. Flossing helps remove food and bacteria between teeth, helping to ward off periodontal disease, which can lead to tooth loss. It can also prevent cavities from forming between teeth (interproximal cavities).

For tight teeth, waxed floss can often help in these situations; floss threaders can also make it easier to clean between tight teeth. For those who "don't know how," there are YouTube videos available. We'd be more than happy to show you how it's



done at your next visit. Just a bit of practice and it becomes second nature.

For those who find traditional floss difficult and time-consuming, there are alternatives. U-shaped flossers make it easier to

reach back teeth. Interdental cleaners include dental/floss picks, prethreaded flossers, tiny brushes that extend between teeth, wooden plaque removers, and powered air or water flossers.

If you experience discomfort or notice bleeding when flossing, chances are good that gingivitis is present. Effective flossing should help to alleviate this condition, but if the problem doesn't improve within a few weeks, a professional diagnosis should be sought.

Middle-Aged Men and Gum Disease

Gum disease has long been associated with certain demographic groups. For example, the elderly and patients without access to regular dental care often fall victim to periodontal disease, which can lead to tooth loss.

Genetics, smoking, and poor oral care play roles in periodontal disease, but evidence from a German study a few years ago also suggests that middle-aged men who are not physically active but who otherwise seem healthy may be at a significantly increased risk of developing periodontal disease. Researchers worked with more than 70 men who did not exercise regularly and whose jobs required them to be seated most of the day.

While the study found that the men over age 45 in the sample had a higher risk of gum disease than younger men, risk climbed even higher when the group was compared to men who led more active lifestyles. Some researchers have asserted that regular physical activity and a healthy weight can lower the chances of developing gum disease by as much as 40 percent.

The good news for middle-aged men in similar circumstances is that improved health — including dental health — can begin today. Lifestyle changes that include wise dietary choices, regular exercise, good oral hygiene, and professional dental checkups will be of benefit. Those are sound guidelines for any age group.



Hitting a Musical Low Note



Studies have been conducted that examined the cleanliness of musical instruments held to the mouth — woodwind and brass instruments — used by high school band and music students. Testing unearthed hundreds of types of bacteria, 19 kinds of yeast, and over 50 forms of mold lurking in nearly every crevice. Some were still alive and well weeks after an instrument's last use.

Many of the bacteria were of the *Staphylococcus* variety, which are instigators of staph infections. Molds can contribute to asthma. Yeast may lead to skin infections around the mouth and lips. Because many of the bacteria identified are resistant to antibiotics, it's important that mouthpieces be cleaned after each use and the entire instrument sanitized on a regular basis.

Areas of the instrument that touch the mouth and skin should receive special attention by being wiped frequently with disinfecting solutions made specifically for that instrument. Encourage your child to talk to his or her music teacher or band director for specific instructions on sterilizing their instrument, and remind them to never share a mouthpiece with other students.

And it's not just musical instruments. Dentures, athletic mouthguards, and toothbrushes, among other mouth-related appliances, are also breeding grounds for bacteria. Proper care goes a long way toward keeping your mouth and the rest of your body healthy.



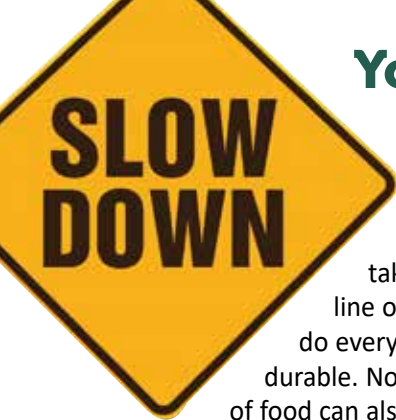
SMOKELESS TOBACCO as Bad as Cigarettes

Smoking is a major detriment to one's health; it's been documented for decades. Perhaps less well known are the negative consequences of using smokeless tobacco, or "chew."

Cigarettes and smokeless tobacco battle each other tooth and nail to see which can do more damage. For instance, smoking raises the temperature in your mouth, which can damage important cells. In turn, the chemicals and substances in smokeless tobacco linger in your mouth longer and are in direct contact with teeth and gums.

Smokeless tobacco has been linked with receding gums, which can lead to tooth loss; rapid tooth decay (smokeless tobacco contains sugar!); and oral cancer, especially in the area where a user "holds" the tobacco in their mouth. Smokeless tobacco users are 50 times more likely to develop oral cancer than the average person. Over 50,000 people are diagnosed with oral or oropharyngeal cancer each year in this country. Nearly 10,000 succumb to it.

Bottom line, tobacco in all its forms is a bottomless pit of negativity, and smokeless tobacco is every bit as unhealthy as cigarettes and cigars. If you notice anything suspicious on your gums, lips, tongue, cheek, or back of the throat, contact our office for a thorough evaluation. Regular dental checkups give you a leg up on diminishing the threat of oral cancer.

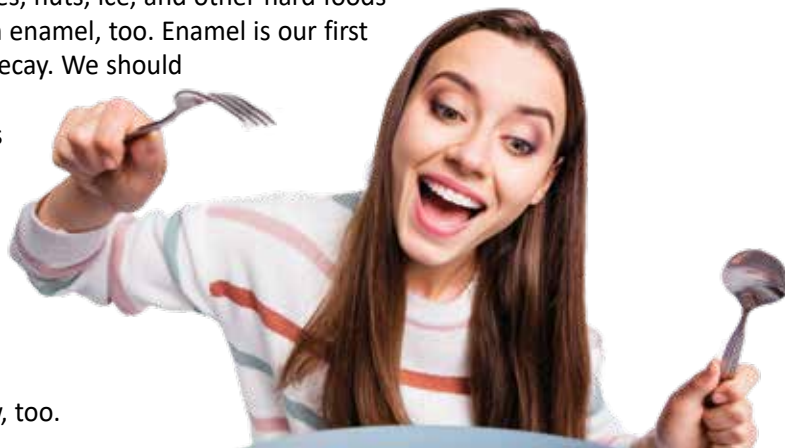


You Eat TOO FAST!

Our mouth, teeth, and jaw sometimes go through the ringer when we eat. For instance, people who fly through a meal tend to take larger bites and chew quickly. That's not a recipe for good jaw health, and for those with temporomandibular joint disease, their condition can be exacerbated. Crunching down on rock-solid candies, nuts, ice, and other hard foods takes a toll not only on the jaw, but tooth enamel, too. Enamel is our first line of defense against bacteria that cause decay. We should do everything we can to keep it strong and durable. Not to mention, in our haste, sharper bits of food can also do a number on our gums, tongue, and insides of the cheeks.

Just two words of advice for those whose mealtimes are whirlwinds: Slow down. Eating slowly and taking smaller bites can make food more pleasurable and help keep your jaw and teeth in tip-top shape. Another important consideration is that thoroughly chewing one's food aids the digestion process.

Food is meant to be savored. Doing so will help your teeth and jaw, too.



*Thank you for
choosing us!
We are so grateful
for wonderful
patients like YOU!*

Daniel W. Fridh, D.D.S., M.A.G.D.

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Hi, I'm Dr. Chloe!

I'm joining Dr. Fridh and team from the Indiana University School of Dentistry (IUSD) with a Doctor of Dental Surgery (D.D.S.) degree. Indiana has always been my home — I was born and raised in Muncie, Indiana, by my parents, Michel and Olga; my older sister Gabby; and our Bichon Frise fur baby, Sophie. All three (humans) are teachers and Ball State graduates, so you could say I'm the oddball in the family, but nonetheless they are happy to have a dentist around! With my parents as role models, I grew up with a love for learning and community service. Dentistry has allowed me to pursue a career combining the two.

Prior to attending dental school at IUSD, I attended Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, where I graduated with honors with a Bachelor of Science degree in human biology, and minored in chemistry, anthropology, and communications and culture. Go, Hoosiers!

I recently moved to the Northwest Indiana area with my fiancé and fellow dentist, Dr. Rob McBride. Rob and I had assigned seats next to each other in our first lab class in dental school, and it was love at first cavity! We are looking forward to making Northwest Indiana our home and have enjoyed spending time at the dunes, discovering local farmers markets, and cuddling our little black cat, Frankie. I love to eat, laugh, and sing, usually all three at once, and I hope to share these interests with each of you.

I am excited to join Dr. Fridh, his team, and to meet all of you — the amazing patients I keep hearing about. I intend to honor and uphold the values and ideals for patient care, as laid out by Dr. Fridh, and cannot wait to begin creating long-lasting relationships with each of you.

I hope to meet you all soon!
— Dr. Chloe