

WORD OF MOUTH

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REGULAR DENTAL VISITS COULD SAVE YOU MONEY

When times are tough, it's smart to cut costs where you can. But think twice before you cut out regular dental visits this year. They can actually save you money in the long run.

A primary reason is gum disease (periodontal disease). More than 80% of American adults develop some form of this bacterial infection under their gumline.¹ But because it often starts without symptoms, you may not know you have it until the infection is severe and your gums and other tooth-support tissues are damaged.

Here are two reasons a routine dental visit twice yearly is so important:

1. Only a professional cleaning can remove infectious bacteria under your gumline and hardened plaque (or tartar), which can lead to decay and gum disease. *You can't remove these with a toothbrush or floss.*
2. During a professional exam, we can check for signs of gum disease and other dental trouble you may be unaware of. By finding problems early, we can address them with less extensive—and less expensive—treatments.

Prevention and early treatment are the keys to keeping your teeth and gums healthy and to saving money on your dental bills. So let us help!

Don't hesitate to call us with any questions about costs or payment issues. We're here to help. As your dental healthcare team, we want to make sure we do all we can to help keep you as healthy as possible.

3 Myths That Can Cost You a Healthy Mouth

MYTH: "A little bleeding is normal with tooth brushing."

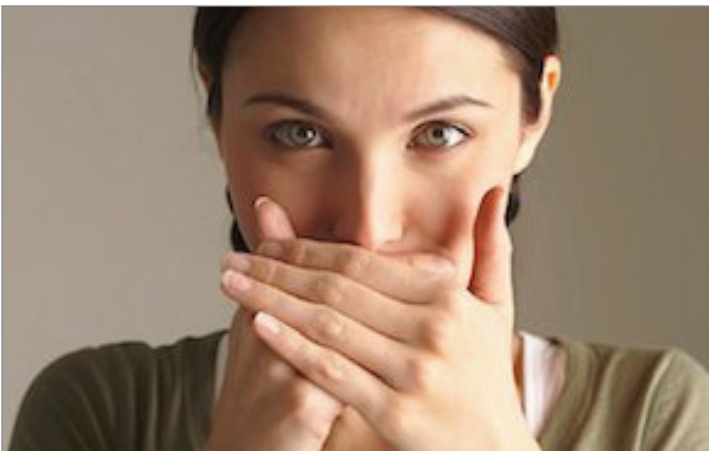
FACT: Bleeding gums can signal gum disease. Schedule a visit as soon as possible if you notice any bleeding or other warning signs—such as sore or swollen gums, gums that are receding or pulling away from your teeth, or chronic bad breath.

MYTH: "Only people who don't clean their teeth well get gum disease."

FACT: Regular tooth brushing and flossing may lower your risk for gum disease, but they can't eliminate it. Other factors can increase your risk, no matter how well you clean your teeth. They include smoking, taking certain medications, and having a family history of gum disease. Professional cleanings and check ups are vital to helping you avoid serious gum disease.

MYTH: "I'll notice signs of gum disease before it gets severe."

FACT: Don't rely on pain to tell when dental troubles start. Gum disease often starts "silently." Regular dental visits help us spot early signs of dental problems you may not notice. And prompt treatment means you're less likely to need costly surgery or tooth removal and replacement.



UNPLEASANT BREATH AND DRY MOUTH OFTEN GO HAND IN HAND

Saliva is your mouth's best natural defense. Sure, it helps you chew and swallow, but saliva also washes and protects your teeth and gums. When you don't produce enough, you're at higher risk for bacterial buildup, cavities, and bad breath.

The most common cause of dry mouth is medication. More than 400 medications are linked to it—including antihistamines, antidepressants, blood pressure and bladder prescriptions, and over-the-counter sleep aids.

Call our office if you notice dry mouth or bad breath that

The most common cause of dry mouth is medication

won't go away. We can review your medications and check for other causes of dry mouth. To relieve minor dryness and freshen your breath, try sugarless hard candy or gum. These help saliva flow without promoting tooth decay.



Sour Candies Are as Bad as Sweet Candies for Children's Teeth

Sour candies are increasingly popular among kids today. But don't make the mistake of thinking they're any safer for teeth because they contain less sugar. A recent study in the journal *Northwest Dentistry* found that sour treats have acid levels approaching that of battery acid.² Consuming them softens and erodes your child's tooth enamel—which can lead to cavities, staining, and sensitive teeth.

Try to steer clear of candies labeled "sour" or "tart" or that contain "concentrated fruit juice extracts." If kids do eat them, have them immediately rinse their mouths with water. And AVOID brushing right away, because the bristles and toothpaste can scratch away enamel that's been softened by these acidic candies.

². Loewen RR, Marolt RJ, Ruby JD. Pucker up—The Effects of Sour Candy on Your Patient's Oral Health. A Review of the Dental Erosion Literature and pH Values of Popular Candies. *Northwest Dent* 2008; 87(2): 20-35.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU SOON



Regular visits are recommended to keep your mouth in good shape.

CALL US TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT THAT'S CONVENIENT FOR YOU!

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