

# Hawkeye Family Dental

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March 2012– Volume 3 Issue 1

## Filled In

Acid reflux can cause a lot of damage to your teeth in a short period of time. The bigger problem is millions of Americans have acid reflux and don't know it, therefore the damage continues. Acid reflux is a condition in which the acidic contents of your stomach back track, up through your esophagus and enter your mouth. Acid reflux most often affects adults, but it can also affect children. Acid reflux can be very damaging to teeth because the acid present in the mouth can erode the tooth structure, resulting in "acid erosion." Acid erosion erodes away the outer most layer of tooth structure (enamel), and exposes the underlying dentin. This weakens your teeth and can cause them to become very sensitive to temperature. Acid erosion can have a devastating effect on teeth so it is important to recognize the signs early and treat it before the damage has extended too far. If you notice an acidic taste in your mouth, you should rinse with water or swish with a fluoridated toothpaste. It is important to avoid brushing for at least 30 minutes after the acid attack because the toothbrush bristles rubbing across the softened tooth structure may increase the damage. Swishing

with a fluoridated toothpaste will not only help to get rid of the taste from the acid, but it will also allow the fluoride to incorporate into the damaged areas of the tooth and aid in cavity prevention.



This picture shows teeth that have been effected by acid erosion. See the smooth glossy surface and the thin teeth.

## Ask Kari

**Help! I have been told I have bad breath, what can I do to get rid of it?**



Bad breath, also known as halitosis, can be caused by many sources. The most common source is odor-producing bacteria. Without proper brushing and flossing, small bits of food remain in your mouth. These pieces of food are consumed by the bacteria that are naturally present in every mouth. When the bacteria digest the food, a sulfur byproduct is formed, thus producing a foul odor. The best way to prevent bad breath is to remove all food and debris from your mouth. This can be accomplished with proper brushing and flossing. This includes brushing the teeth on all sides, including the gumline and also brushing the top of your tongue. Tongue scrapers are available in stores and often make cleaning your tongue easier. It is also important to remove the debris between the teeth with flossing. Regular professional dental cleanings also play an important role because at your appointment, the calculus/tartar that normally stores bacteria is removed. It is also a great time to get tips on your brushing and flossing techniques, so that you can get the most benefit from your efforts.

## \$\$\$ Money Matters    \$\$\$ Coordination of Benefits

Some of our patients are covered under more than one dental insurance plan. This is often the case with spouses who have insurance coverage through their employers and are covered under each other's plans or for children covered under two parents' separate dental policies. It is also common for young people who are covered under a dental plan with their own employer but are still under the age limit for dependent coverage on their parents' dental insurance policy. It is even possible for one person to be the policy holder on more than one dental insurance plan. If any of these scenarios apply to you or if you are considering coverage with multiple dental plans, coordination of benefits is an important topic for you.

If you are covered under your own dental plan as well as under the plan of a spouse, parent or guardian, or if you have multiple plans on your own, you have primary and secondary dental insurance coverage. You need to notify both insurance companies of your other coverage so they can correctly process and pay your dental claims. Insurance companies have their own rules regarding coordination of benefits and which plan will be considered primary vs. secondary. These rules determine which plan your dental claims should be submitted to first. If an insurance company receives a secondary insurance claim without the claim having been submitted to primary insurance first, it will usually be denied until it is processed under the primary plan. The best way to know and understand your plan's coordination of benefits rule is to call your insurance company and speak to a representative.

GOOD DENTAL HYGIENE IS IMPORTANT FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY ... BUT FLOSSING YOUR CAT WAS PROBABLY A BAD IDEA.



*Continued on back.....*

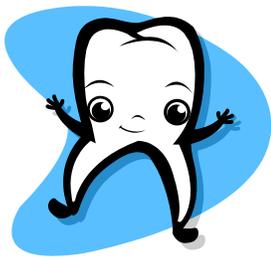


## You've got mail!

If you would like to receive email confirmations for your upcoming appointments, please provide us with your email address. Also, don't forget to update us if you change your email address so we may keep our records current.

## Kids Corner – Wisdom Teeth

Third molars, also known as wisdom teeth, are the furthest back teeth in the mouth. They are the last teeth to erupt and usually erupt anywhere from 16 to 21 years of age, if they erupt at all. Wisdom teeth are usually not functional, and are the most commonly extracted teeth due the extensive list of concerns/problems associated with them. Some of the problems include:



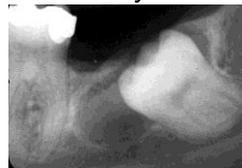
**Infection:** When a wisdom tooth does not have the space to erupt all of the way, a flap of tissue remains over part of the wisdom tooth. This area is prone to infection because of the difficulty in keeping it clean of bacteria.

**Decay:** Wisdom teeth are often tipped and rotated due to lack of space. This makes them even more difficult to keep clean and they are, therefore, more prone to cavities.

**Damage to adjacent teeth:** If an erupting wisdom tooth does not have enough space to erupt, it may resorb the adjacent tooth to make space for eruption, permanently damaging the other tooth.

**Crowding:** Pressure from erupting wisdom teeth can cause or increase crowding of the front teeth. This can be disappointing if you have already had braces to straighten them.

**Cysts:** A fluid filled sack can form around an unerupted tooth, requiring extraction of the tooth and the cyst



*Money Matters continued.....*  
 When you come to your dental appointment, please make sure you let us know if you have insurance coverage with more than one dental plan. This will ensure that we are able to process your claims in a timely manner and allow us to know your coverage and properly estimate the co-insurance for your treatment.

Extraction of wisdom teeth is suggested in cases where there is limited space to allow proper eruption of the wisdom teeth. Extractions can be straightforward if they are completed prior to full root development. We will work with you to help you decide if you will need your wisdom teeth extracted, and if so, the best time to have them extracted.