

Hawkeye Family Dental

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September 2012– Volume 3 Issue 3

Filled In -- Have you ever been told you have a cavity and were surprised because you didn't have any pain? This is not as uncommon as it may seem. Tooth pain and cavities are not always directly related. Sometimes, small cavities do not cause any aches or pains and patients aren't even aware they exist until the dentist performs an exam. In other cases, patients who come in suspecting they have a cavity find out that they are only experiencing sensitivity and do not have any cavities. In most cases, teeth that become very painful most likely have a cavity and may require more extensive repair work depending on the extent of the cavity. We encourage patients to keep up on regular cleanings and check-ups to evaluate the health of their teeth and gums and make sure that if there is a problem, it is taken care of before it becomes painful and requires a more extensive treatment.



From left to right: a healthy tooth; a tooth with a small starter cavity (watch); a tooth with a moderate cavity; a tooth with a large cavity that has reached the nerve; a tooth with a cavity so large that the nerve has been infected.



As Seen on TV

Are you interested in straighter teeth but don't like the idea of spending months in braces? Recent TV advertisements promote a more esthetic way to straighten teeth called "Invisalign." This treatment works in several steps in which patients wear a series of clear, plastic trays made specifically for them from impressions taken by their orthodontist. As teeth shift and a person's bite changes, new trays are provided, until the final result is achieved. Television ads make Invisalign look easy and more appealing than traditional metal braces and it can be a good option in some cases. However, there are a few drawbacks to this method. The results that can be achieved with traditional braces are much more exact than those possible using Invisalign because the brackets and wires in metal braces allow the orthodontist to make very precise changes in rotation and/or position. Another drawback of Invisalign is that, although the trays are clear, they are not truly "invisible" and they may affect speech when they are worn. If you are interested in Invisalign or traditional braces, let us know at your next appointment and we can help you look at the benefits and drawbacks as they relate to your mouth specifically.

Ask Kari

My gums bleed when I brush, is that normal?

No, it is not normal for your gums to bleed when you brush or floss. Gums that bleed with even gentle manipulation is a sign of inflammation (gingivitis or periodontal disease). Gum tissue can become inflamed for several reasons, including: lack of brushing and flossing, improper brushing and flossing, medications, harmful bacteria, and lack of regular professional dental cleanings. If your gums bleed when you brush you should set up an appointment for a professional cleaning and check-up. At your appointment we will remove the calculus/tartar build-up that harbors the harmful bacteria. We will also help you improve your brushing/flossing routine to help you maintain the health of your teeth and gums. You may find that after this visit your gum tissue still bleeds when you are brushing and flossing. Do not give up, it may take several days of really good brushing and flossing to help the gum tissue become healthy again. If you do not brush and floss, the inflammation will progress and may create a bigger problem.

\$\$ Money Matters \$\$

In-Network vs. Out-of-Network Providers

Whether you are changing jobs, changing dentists or considering buying individual dental insurance, an important question to ask is, "Is my dentist in-network or out-of-network with my dental insurance company?" Knowing this will aid you in estimating and planning for the way your dental services and treatment needs will be covered by insurance.

If a provider is "in-network" (sometimes called preferred and/or participating), that provider has contracted with an insurance company to accept the insurance company's fee schedule. This means the dental provider must write-off the difference between their fees and the insurance company's allowable amount and patients must pay their percentage of co-insurance. For providers that are considered "out-of-network", there is no contract so they are not required to write-off anything. The patient is responsible for paying their percentage of co-insurance as well as the difference between the dentist's fees and the insurance company's allowed amount.

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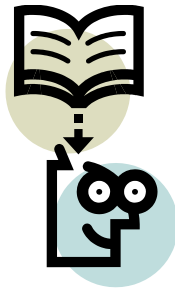


Providing smiles for the whole family

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Dental History Lesson:

Irene Newman became the world's first dental hygienist in 1906. Prior to 1906, she had been working as a chairside dental assistant for her cousin, Dr. Alfred Fones. Dr. Fones taught Irene how to clean teeth and perform other preventive treatments. In 1913, Dr. Fones established the first school of dental hygiene.

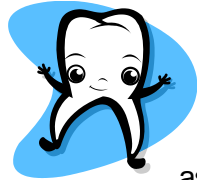


Thank you for your referrals. We are still accepting new patients and are ready to provide your friends and family with great care!

Money Matters continued.....

Some additional benefits to using a dental provider that is in-network with your insurance carrier can be: higher annual maximums and lower deductibles (or no deductible at all), and better coverage of certain services (ex. 80% coverage for fillings done by an in-network provider rather than 50% coverage for fillings done by an out-of-network provider). Sometimes, depending on the insurance company and the plan, there is no difference in coverage between in-network and out-of-network providers.

If you have questions regarding your provider's status under your insurance plan, call your insurance company's customer service line. They should be able to give you details on the differences between the in-network and out-of-network coverage and provide you with a list of in-network providers in your area. At Hawkeye Family Dental, we are in-network with several of the most commonly used dental insurance companies: Delta Dental, United Concordia, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Cigna, and MetLife. However, as a courtesy to our patients, we gladly file claims with all dental insurance plans, regardless of whether we are in-network or out-of-network with that company.



Kids Corner Fluoride Varnish



Fluoride varnish is applied as a thin film directly on the teeth and contains a high concentration of fluoride. This high concentration helps to prevent cavities by incorporating into the tooth and remineralizing (hardening) weakened areas of the tooth. It also helps limit the risk of cavities by interacting with the bacteria that cause decay and protects against acid attacks that breakdown tooth structure. Fluoride varnish is safe and effective and is therefore suggested every six months for children with a low to moderate risk of cavities. For children with a high risk of cavities, fluoride varnish is suggested every 3 months. Some factors used in determining a child's risk are: the quality of brushing and flossing; the presence of modifying factors to brushing-such as braces and their history of cavities. If a child has had a cavity in the last three years, the American Dental Association considers them to be high risk and suggests fluoride varnish application four times per year. At Hawkeye Family Dental we suggest fluoride varnish at every recall appointment. The small investment in the fluoride protection is small compared to the time and money spent on cavities.