

# Hawkeye Family Dental

1705 S 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue Suite P – Iowa City, IA 52240 – 319-338-7172 - www.smilesforthefamily.com  
September 2010 Volume 1 Issue 3

## Filled In

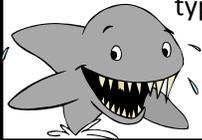
### What types of fillings are right for you?

There are two great options to choose from when deciding which filling choice is right for you: “silver fillings” and “tooth colored fillings.” There are several things to consider, including: strength, longevity, durability, cost, and esthetics.

An amalgam filling, or “silver filling,” is a filling material that has been used for over a century in dentistry. This material is very durable and can withstand the forces of chewing, especially on the back molars. Because of its strength, amalgam has been reported to last years longer than “tooth colored fillings.” Amalgam fillings are generally less expensive and are often covered better by

insurance. The main disadvantage of an amalgam filling is that it doesn't blend with the tooth's natural color. *Continued on the back.....*

Fun Fact: Sharks replace their teeth every 6-8 weeks, allowing their front row to fall out and a new row to move forward. They typically shed around 1800 per year, resulting in tens of thousands of teeth shed over a lifetime.



As Seen on TV

**Polident got it right when they said “Toothpaste is great for teeth. Polident® is better for dentures.”**

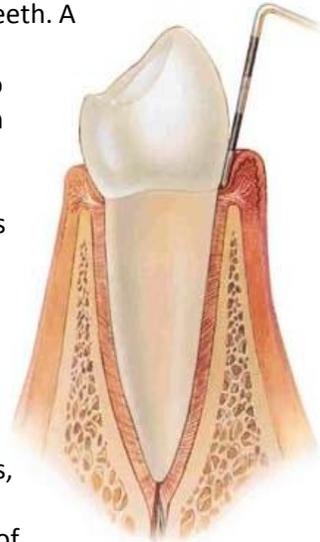
Toothpaste is abrasive. Dentures are softer than teeth, and using regular toothpaste on your dentures can result in microscopic scratches on the denture surface. These scratches are the perfect breeding grounds for odor-causing bacteria and also can make your denture more likely to become stained. The best way to clean your denture is to thoroughly brush the inside and outside of your denture with hand dish soap (such as Dawn or Palmolive) and warm water. After cleaning your denture, place it in room temperature water to soak overnight. Once a week, after cleaning your denture with hand dish soap, allow your denture to soak overnight with a cleaner made for dentures, such as Polident. Polident works well, but is not necessary every night.

## Ask Kari

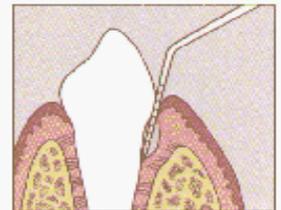
### What do those numbers mean?

During your regular cleaning and check-up, part of the appointment is performing a periodontal examination to check the health of the gum tissue and bone supporting your teeth. A measuring device called a periodontal probe is used to measure the space between the gum tissue and tooth. Each tooth has 6

measurements recorded (3 on the cheek side, 3 on the tongue side). These measurements, or numbers,



help to evaluate the health of the gum tissue. Generally, a measurement of 1, 2, or 3mm is considered healthy, showing the gum tissue is tight to the tooth. A measurement of 4mm or above, or any measurement associated with bleeding, is generally a sign of inflammation and gum disease, requiring further attention and follow-up. With proper homecare and regular hygiene appointments we can help get your gum tissue healthy and maintain it.



Periodontal probe showing pockets.

## \$\$\$ Money Matters \$\$\$

Have you ever received an explanation of benefits from your insurance company or a statement from the dentist's office with a note saying, “Posterior composites covered at the rate of amalgam.”? Many insurance plans have a limitation for coverage of tooth colored fillings (composites) on back teeth (posterior). This limitation is often referred to as a “downgrade on posterior composites.” In general, if a dental plan has this downgrade it means that insurance will pay for the tooth colored filling as if it were an amalgam (or silver colored) filling and the patient is responsible for the difference.

For example, let's say an insurance plan covers fillings at 80% and has a downgrade on posterior composites. If the patient chooses a tooth colored filling on a back tooth and the fee for a composite filling is \$120.00 and the fee for an amalgam filling is \$100.00 then the insurance portion would be 80% of \$100.00 = \$80.00 and the patient portion would be the 20% co-pay of the amalgam rate, \$20.00, plus the difference between the composite and amalgam fees, \$20.00, for a total of \$40.00.

*Continued on the back.....*



### Baked Apple Chips

- 1 cup water
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 large apples, not peeled, cut into thin slices

1) Heat oven to 225° F. Place foil on two baking sheets. Spray wire racks with nonstick cooking spray, place on foil covered baking sheets. 2) Place water and sugar in 2qt saucepan. Bring to a boil, stirring until sugar dissolves. Boil for 3-5 minutes until it is a light syrup consistency. 3) Place sliced apples in a large bowl, add syrup mixture. Toss apples with tongs until well coated. Place slices individually on wire rack, so they are not overlapping. 4) Bake for 2-2.5 hours (depending on the thickness of the apple slices) until light golden brown. Loosen chips, let cool on rack. Chips will become crisp as they cool. Store in airtight container.



### Filled In continued.....

A composite filling, or “tooth colored filling,” blends with the color of your tooth, restoring its natural appearance. The main advantage of a composite filling is the esthetics. Composite fillings are used on front teeth and can be used on back teeth; however, these fillings are not as strong as amalgam and therefore need to be replaced more frequently. Composite fillings usually cost a little more than amalgam and are not covered as well by insurance. The next time you need a filling, consider this information and consult with us to help you decide which option is best for you and your teeth.

### Money Matters continued.....

Some plans downgrade their coverage of posterior composites by covering them at a lower percentage than amalgam fillings. If a plan covers fillings at 80% then it might only cover posterior composite fillings at 60% so the patient’s co-pay would be 40%, rather than 20%. Although we try to be aware of all the details of each patient’s dental plan, the best way for you to be sure of the limitations of your policy, including downgrades on posterior composites, is to read through your benefit manual and call your insurance representatives with questions.

### Kids Corner

Fall marks the start of another school year and a new athletic season. As you or your child prepare to take part in sports make sure to include a mouthguard as part of your athletic gear. A mouthguard is absolutely essential in contact sports, but is also important in non contact sports. Mouthguards help to buffer the impact of a blow that could otherwise cause broken teeth, jaw injuries or cuts to the lip, tongue or face. In fact, athletes that do not wear mouthguards are 60 times more likely to suffer harm to the teeth than those who do wear mouthguards. There are two different types of mouthguards available 1) boil and bite, 2) custom made. Custom made mouthguards are made at the dental office. We make a custom impression of your mouth and make a mouthguard that will fit tightly to your teeth and gums. Custom mouthguards offer more protection than the boil and bite mouthguard and because sports related dental injuries can cost thousands of dollars, a custom mouthguard is well worth the investment.

