

# *Brazos Family Dentistry*

# TOOTH TALK



Produced to improve your dental health and awareness

Spring 2010

## fromthedentists

### Spreading The Word

#### *Thank you so much*

The power of the spoken word cannot be denied. When used to help improve the lives of others, words not only bring positive change, they often bring life-long results. And, when spoken as a referral or "personal testimonial," all kinds of good things spring forth.

Do you know how we measure the quality of care we provide for you? Every time you return to our practice, give us your positive feedback, and tell your friends, family, and colleagues to come see us for their dental care, you are letting us know that what we do for you matters. Your support motivates us to continue raising the bar on the superior standards you expect.

Thank you, from all of us, for your wonderful feedback, your loyalty, and your ongoing new patient referrals.

*Yours in good dental health,*

*Dr. Russell Ross &  
Dr. Crystell Billman*

## turnthepage

How can you make a difference?

What *e/*se we've learned from monkeys...

Blast that belly fat!



Given the choice, most people would prefer a beautiful smile with perfectly aligned teeth over a smile that showed crooked or crowded teeth that diminishes their self-esteem. That's because most of us know that in our society, an appealing smile is held in high esteem. In addition, straight teeth and aligned jaws are easier to brush and floss, lowering the incidence of cavities, gum disease, and tooth loss. Could orthodontics – the art of placing gentle pressure on teeth to move them into proper alignment – help you smile more?

The type and duration of treatment varies according to each patient's condition. We'll examine and assess your teeth, and discuss a treatment plan that's best for you. Options include the "traditional" braces

you're probably most familiar with: bands, wires, elastics, and removable appliances. A more recently available option is invisible braces – a series of clear, removable aligners.

For some adults, minimal tooth movement is sufficient to overcome slightly misaligned front teeth – top or bottom – in only a few months. For others, where appearance is a greater concern than bite issues, *Lumineers™* can be custom-fitted over the front of teeth. They've been called instant orthodontics because they can straighten the appearance of teeth in two visits!

Let us help you smile more! Give us a call to discuss the best orthodontic option to suit your oral health needs, lifestyle, and budget. Orthodontic consults are always Complimentary.

*Thank you for all your referrals. We appreciate them!*

# When You Lose You Win

What you need to know about belly fat

Trying to get rid of a swelling waistline? Go for it. Although it makes up less than 5% of total body fat, belly or visceral fat burrows around the heart, pancreas, and other organs. And it's different from other types of fat because it produces inflammatory compounds that can raise your risk for heart disease, diabetes, and some types of cancer, lung diseases, and dementia. Gum disease has been linked to inflammatory diseases too.

**And it's getting more complicated...**

Research suggests that oral bacteria may contribute directly to the development of obesity which is also inflammatory in nature.

**How's that?**

Your mouth contains billions of bacteria which if not removed by regular brushing and flossing will cause inflammation and infection.

Gum disease is also the most common cause of adult tooth loss and it has been estimated that most adults have it to some degree.

**How will you know?**

Initially you probably won't because gum disease appears silently. So keep your recall appointments. Some of the early warning signs are swollen and tender gums, bad breath, and gums that bleed when you floss.

**Is there any good news?**

Lots. You can halt and sometimes reverse gum disease with early diagnosis and treatment combined with daily brushing and flossing. And there's more. Consistent moderate exercise helps you lose deep abdominal fat – even when your scale doesn't show weight loss!



## Oral Cancer Bites

**Start early & win!**

Oral cancer victims are getting younger. Many of these young adults don't smoke, chew tobacco, drink, or have diabetes or HIV. Scientists suspect another culprit – the *human papilloma virus* (HPV). Most types of this virus are relatively harmless – they cause warts, for example. However, some transmittable forms have been linked to oral cancers.

Regardless of cause, visual monitoring is essential for early cancer detection at any age. Starting in your mid-teens, get into these preventive habits...

**A** Check your tongue, lips, cheek lining, and gums.

**B** Let us know about sores or ulcers that bleed easily or do not heal, white or red patches or lumps that don't go away, and lingering soreness.

**C** Share with us any difficulty you have with chewing, swallowing, or speaking.

Make self-screening your life's work. With early detection, most oral cancer can be cured.



Many challenges? We have many ways to beautify a smile!



# Reality Checks

## We can tell you why it is what it is!

We're happy to say that most dental problems can be treated successfully ... but we need you to keep your regular recall appointments so that we can help you maintain your oral health and your best smile.

Here's why. Our team is trained to detect oral clues that might point to future problems or even possible health issues in other parts of your body. At every recall appointment, we check you for:

- the beginning of cavities, including decay hidden under the gumline or under existing fillings;
- gum disease which can lead to tooth loss;
- bad breath which is usually caused from sources in the mouth;
- hairline fractures;
- impacted wisdom teeth;
- sensitive teeth which could indicate enamel erosion, a loose filling, or an infected inflamed nerve;
- changes in the size, shape, color, and feel of your tissues;
- early signs of lip cancer and tumors in your saliva glands, palate, and tongue;
- canker sores and injuries to the mouth caused by utensils and even by toothbrushes.

You see? Working together, we can help keep your mouth healthy and free from cavities, gum disease, and other disorders including oral cancer.

The bonus is that in addition to having clean teeth, pink firm gums, an uncoated tongue, and fresh-smelling breath, you can take advantage of many of the exciting cosmetic options available to you right now!



## LIKE NIGHT & DAY

### What a difference!

Some simple adjustments to your nightly routine can be a step forward in living a healthier lifestyle *and* reducing your carbon footprint.

- ◆ If you take really long showers, you could save more water and energy by soaking in the tub until you're clean, relaxed, and ready for bed. If you don't like baths, use a timer or energy-saver shower head.
- ◆ Floss, brush, and gently scrape your tongue to remove bacteria and improve your oral and overall health.
- ◆ A slightly cooler bedroom temperature can improve sleep, conserve energy, and save dollars, so lower your thermostat, open a window, or install an energy-efficient fan.

## Monkey See...

### Monkey do?

Female long-tailed macaque monkeys in Thailand have been observed teaching their young how to use strands of hair to clean between their teeth. If monkeys can floss, so can you!

If you're not flossing, you're missing about a third of your tooth surfaces. Even if you were fasting, you'd still need to brush and floss which is the only way to prevent the buildup of the naturally and constantly occurring bacterial plaque and tartar that can cause gum disease.

There's definitely a perfect technique for you. You might prefer waxed floss to unwaxed. Floss holders and threaders are handy. Wider floss and dental tape are excellent if you have gum recession and bone loss.

To hone your technique, don't go to the zoo ... come see us for a demo!

# Lumineers™

We are so excited about Lumineers™, we decided to tell everyone at the "With This Ring" Bridal Extravaganza. Visitors to our booth had a complimentary LUMISmile® Makeover, and the results were AMAZING! Lumineers™ can transform your smile, and in contrast to traditional veneers, Lumineers don't require shots or drilling of sensitive tooth structure, and that means no pain. That's because Lumineers are ultra-thin so they can be applied seamlessly over your existing teeth in only two easy visits to your dentist.



Left to right: Tiffany, Melinda, Kelly & Diana

**For your Complimentary LUMISmile® Makeover and Consultation, simply ask for it at your next visit or give us a call at (254) 799-5746 to schedule an appointment.**

## office information

**Brazos Family Dentistry**  
**Dr. Russell Ross & Crystell Billman**  
 3620 Scroggins Drive  
 Waco, TX 76705-2579

### Office Hours

Monday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm  
 Tuesday 7:00 am – 7:00 pm  
 Wednesday 7:00 am – 7:00 pm  
 Thursday 7:00 am – 7:00 pm  
 Friday 7:00 am – 2:30 pm

### Contact Information

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### Office Staff

Melinda ..... Office Manager  
 Amy ..... Appointment Coordinator  
 Terri ..... Insurance Coordinator  
 Kelly ..... Hygiene Coordinator  
 Cindy, Kim ..... Hygienists  
 Joy, Diana, Bea, Michelle .....  
 ..... Dental Assistants

**CareCredit**



**Congratulations to Michael & Dr. Crystell Billman as they celebrate the birth of their twins, Brooke and Brady.**

Mom and babies are all doing great! The twins were born February 8th, 2010.

Brady weighed in at 6 lbs 7 oz. and Brooke at 5 lbs 10 oz. Congratulations also to big brother Lane. We wish the Billman family all the best.

**Oral Cancer**  
 Screening  
**Now Only \$30**  
 Call to schedule this  
 life saving exam  
 today or ask for it at  
**your next visit.**