

Brazos Family Dentistry TOOTH TALK



Produced for the Patients of Brazos Family Dentistry

Spring 2012

from the dentists

Insurance Update

We are always available to help you understand your benefits and how to make the most of them, and an important part of that is keeping you up-to-date about insurers.

We are in the process of becoming preferred providers for *Humana* and *Aetna*. Of course we are still providers for *Delta Dental* and *United Concordia* and, as always, we are happy to accept many other insurance plans.

We also want to let you know that regardless of your insurer, we will continue to provide the same high quality of care based on your needs rather than policy constraints.

We are here to work with you to meet your individual needs and budget and if you wish to discuss any insurance concerns, please feel free to call our office.

Your in good dental health,

*Dr. Russell Ross and
Dr. Crystell Billman*

Oral cancer screening is FREE with your recall appointment. Call today to confirm or reserve your appointment!

254-799-5746

Keep Your Secret

With Invisalign®

The preferred method for straightening teeth used to be metal braces. As an alternative, we are proud to offer *Invisalign®*, one of the most advanced components of adult cosmetics.

What is Invisalign?

It's a proven method for straightening teeth using a series of custom-made, nearly undetectable aligners.

How does Invisalign work?

Each aligner is precisely calibrated and manufactured to custom-fit over your teeth and gently move them through every stage of your treatment. There are no metal wires and brackets, and you can still enjoy your favorite foods, and brush and floss easily.

Can I benefit?

Adults account for nearly 25% of all orthodontic patients! The most common problems are crowded teeth, teeth spaced too far apart, protruding upper or lower teeth, and upper and lower front teeth that do not touch.

How do I get started?

After consultation and deciding on a treatment plan, we take an impression of your teeth, and submit it to Invisalign. Using the latest 3-D computer technology, our instructions are translated into a series of medical-grade plastic aligners. You can view your own virtual treatment plan when you start, so you can see how great your straight teeth will look!

We know you'll be inspired to consider Invisalign! Please call us for a Complimentary Invisalign Consultation and find out if Invisalign is right for you!



invisalign®

The Clear Alternative to Braces



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Smile-Saving Strategies

Delightful dental implants

You know that sunken look around the mouth and cheeks that you associate with ageing? That isn't inevitable, and often, it isn't even necessary. When teeth are lost, there is also a loss of jawbone so that surrounding teeth shift, resulting in a lack of support to the cheeks and lips. This can create lines around the mouth. Dental implants can save your bone structure which helps you to avoid premature facial changes.

What a dental implant is... A dental implant has two parts: a root made of biocompatible metal and a custom-made tooth crown which is attached to it.

How it works...

- 1 The root is anchored permanently in your jawbone, preventing future bone loss.
- 2 The crown does not rely on other teeth for support & doesn't affect surrounding healthy teeth.
- 3 An implant can replace one tooth or two, or the teeth in an entire jaw.
- 4 Implants can anchor dentures to prevent shifting & can replace partial dentures & bridgework.
- 5 Multiple implants & implant-supported dentures require no plates that cover the roof of your mouth.



What you can do...

Consider safe reliable easy-care and natural-looking dental implants, and call us for a consultation.

Lose Weight...

And keep your smile

Here's a dental perspective that could help you reach your weight loss goals and add to your motivation. Don't overlook the liquids you're consuming! You may know that many beverages can stain your teeth, and that sodas and juices can erode teeth enamel and cause cavities, but here's more...

- A *Harvard* study found that drinking only one diet or regular soft drink a day increased the risk of obesity by 31%.
- Evidence suggests that diet drinks may actually promote weight gain, although the mechanism is unclear.
- Compared to real fruit and vegetables, the lack of fiber in soda can leave you feeling hungry – and heading back to the fridge.

Here's another dental angle... Experts suggest you create cues to signal it's time to stop eating 2-3 hours before bed time. Brushing and flossing is highly recommended!

LEMON *Aid*

A word to the wise

You'd think that acidic food would digest meals faster, but weirdly, the opposite is true. Citric acid in lemons, for example, slows down gastric emptying, holding food in your stomach longer so you feel full longer and avoid snacking.

That's great if you're watching your weight! Lemon juice tastes terrific on poultry, fish, or salads and when combined with oil and herbs for salad dressing. But just a note – you can get too much of a good thing. Lemons, like many foods that contain acids naturally, can cause enamel erosion if consumed excessively.

Still, go ahead and release your inner gourmand! Wise choices and a little moderation will let you enjoy great meals, your best weight, and a fabulous smile!

Veneers Q&A

Here's what you want to know

Q: What are the benefits of veneers?

A: An improved smile can increase your self-confidence which improves your work and social life. Veneers are an effective cosmetic technique used to cover flaws and strengthen your teeth with beautiful results.

Q: How do I know if I'm a good candidate?

A. If your teeth are stained, chipped, or have other minor irregularities like small spaces, uneven lengths, or exposed roots, veneers can work for you. For slightly crooked teeth, veneers can give your teeth a straighter appearance without braces.

Q: Will my veneers stain?

A. Porcelain veneers should never stain, although some other veneer materials are more porous and could. To keep your natural teeth bright, try to reduce or avoid foods and beverages like coffee, tea, red wine, and dark fruit juices, as well as tobacco products. Most patients whiten teeth surrounding their veneer(s) to ensure a good match.

Q: How long will they last?

A. They can last up to 20 years when you take care of your oral health to avoid decay and gum recession.

Q: Is getting veneers a long process?

A. No, it usually takes just two to three appointments for diagnosis, treatment planning, preparation, and placing your veneers.



Common Sense Care

For veneers and crowns

Great news! Veneers can be cared for just like your natural teeth. Brush them regularly with toothpaste, floss once a day, and keep your regular hygiene visits. Just as with your other teeth, it's important to limit your sugar consumption and confine sweets to meal times to help prevent decay.

Although your veneers don't require special care, give them the same respect that you'd give the rest of your smile. Anything that will break or chip your natural teeth could do the same to a veneer, including ice, hard cookies, brittle candy, candy apples, hard nuts, pumpkin seeds, and popcorn. Other culprits? Habits like nail biting, pencil chewing, using your teeth instead of scissors or bottle openers, and even for pulling on your gloves. Once you get the picture, it's easy to take care!



A Lifetime Of Smiles

Dental care for older adults

As an older adult your oral health care should include more than just daily cleaning and flossing. Unlike the cavities of our youth, many later-life problems can develop without outward signs like pain or swelling. One such concern is oral cancer which is treatable if discovered early. Because the majority of oral cancers occur in people over the age of 45, regular dental checkups

are important. We also suggest you choose a date, such as the 1st of each month to check your mouth for anything unusual.

It's important to identify problem areas before they become more serious. Treatments can be far more effective when measures are taken early. Call us immediately if you notice any of the warning signs in your next oral self-exam.



How to examine your mouth:

- Stand up or sit closely in front of a mirror in good lighting.
- Pull each lip back and carefully check your gums.
- Open wide and check your tongue and the insides of your cheeks.
- Using your finger, feel all around the inside of your mouth.

What to look for:

- Any sores on your tongue or in your mouth.
- White patches that won't rub off when scraped with a fingernail or ones that bleed when you do.
- A lump or bump, especially if only on one side of your mouth.
- Swollen, red, or bleeding gums.
- A persistent ulcer on your lip.

office information

Brazos Family Dentistry

Drs. 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
Leandra	Appointment Coordinator
Terri	Insurance Coordinator
Cindy	Hygienists
Joy, Diana, Michelle, Kelly, Crystal	Dental Assistants



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Predetermination Advanced approval

Every day we are asked questions concerning dental insurance. Like most consumers nowadays, you need to know how much is covered and what is the balance. We'd like to answer each and every question, but the variables are endless – each employer negotiates employee dental plans with their own insurance company, resulting in hundreds of different dental plans.

Predetermination can clarify exactly what your insurance company will cover, even before any dental work is started. A treatment plan is prepared by our office and forwarded to your insurance company. In turn, they will let you know exactly what their financial support will be through a letter of authorization. It is possible that your dental work will be just partially covered. If required, we can work out any additional financial arrangements.

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