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John R. Piccione, D.D.S — Margaret A. Roth, D.M.D

AL DENTE

Serving you at two convenient locations: 1322 E. Washington Street, Greenville, SC 235-1200
978 Batesville Road, Greer, SC 675-9399

Publisher's Note:

AL DENTE. Although this term is a culinary term describing the texture of pasta when it's done just right, this term literally means FIRM TO THE TOOTH!

This isn't your typical newsletter purchased from an agency. This is all 'home cooking'—a little rough around the edges, more on the plate than is needed, but it's done from the heart!

Bon Appétit!!

Greenville Drive Ballgame First Come, First Served Tickets!

Saturday, May 5 @ 7 PM



Rocky Creek Night at the Greenville Drive! This year we are giving tickets away on a first come, first served basis! Please call today to reserve your tickets (up to four)! We will also be asking for your t-shirt sizes so be prepared to give us that information when you call! Tickets are limited so please don't delay!! We will ask that you pick up your tickets and t-shirts 2 weeks prior to the game! Make plans today...it will be worth "the drive!" Call Tammy downtown @ 235-1200.

DENTAL X-RAYS

Just the mention of the word "radiation" conjures up an unpleasant image for most people. We associate it with bombs, cancer, and all manner of other bad things. But do you know that there are many beneficial uses of radiation? One type of radiation, x-rays, is used extensively in the medical and dental professions to diagnose and treat a wide variety of conditions.

Just how much radiation do you get from a dental x-ray and how harmful is it? Advances in x-ray equipment, especially film technology, allow your dentist to get a good x-ray image using much less radiation than was previously required. A typical dental x-ray image exposes you to only about 2 or 3 millirem or mrem (a unit used to measure radiation). The National Council on Radiation Protection says that the average resident of the U.S. receives about 360 mrem every year from background sources. This comes from outer space, radioactive material, in the earth, and small amounts of radioactive material in most foods we consume.

Some everyday sources that may expose you to radiation also include smoke detectors (less than 1 mrem per year), living in a brick house instead of a wood one (about 10 mrem per year due to radioactive materials



THANK YOU!!

**Response was great —
St. Jude's Ranch for Children**

The response has been tremendous, from our patients in collecting Campbell's product labels! We will continue to collect them throughout 2007, so bundle those labels up and bring them in to your next appointment! And again, thank you for your help!! For more information on St. Jude's Ranch for children, visit their website at: www.stjudesranch.org.

Mission Statement:

- To enthusiastically treat patients with a commitment to sound quality treatments and unyielding pursuit of patient comfort.
- To always ask ourselves how we can improve the care we can provide
- To use the Golden Rule as a means of professional integrity, honesty and patient advocacy
- To grow our family of patients without compromise to our mission

X-rays....cont'd from page 1

in the masonry), cooking with natural gas (about 10 mrem per year from radon gas in the natural gas supply), reading a book for 3 hours per day (about 1 mrem per year due to small amounts of radioactive materials in the wood used to make the paper), and even from flying in an airplane (about 5 mrem for one cross-country flight because of the increased altitude.) In fact, you receive about 2 mrem per year from sleeping next to someone! This is because all of us have very small amounts of naturally occurring radioactivity.

Obviously, you probably would not refuse to fly on an airplane, live in a brick house, read books, live without smoke detectors, or sleep with your spouse because of the small amount of radiation you receive from these activities. Since your dentist gains valuable information from x-rays to aid you in keeping healthy teeth, it is also not in your best interest to refuse dental x-rays because of the very small amount of radiation you receive from them.

Written by *Steve D. Rima, CHP; Idaho State University, The Radiation Information Network (condensed by Dr. Margaret Roth)

*Steven D. Rima is a Board Certified Health Physicist with over 20 years experience in radiation safety, including teaching medical and dental professionals for state licensure to take medical and dental x-rays.

**OUR HYGIENIST CORNER....****Fluoride – It's not just for Kids!!**

It is well known that fluoride helps prevent and even reverse the early stages of tooth decay. Tooth decay occurs when bacteria - found in the plaque that dentists try so hard to get rid of - break down sugars in food. This process produces damaging acids that dissolve the hard enamel surfaces of teeth. If the damage is not stopped or treated, the bacteria can penetrate through the enamel to the underlying tissues of the teeth, causing cavities (also called caries). Cavities weaken teeth and cause pain, tooth loss, or even widespread infec-

tion in the most severe cases. Fluoride combats tooth decay in two ways. It strengthens tooth enamel so that it can better resist the acid formed by plaque. Fluoride also allows teeth damaged by acid to repair, or remineralize, themselves. Fluoride cannot repair cavities, but it can reverse low levels of tooth decay and thus prevent new cavities from forming.

Your dentist or dental hygienist can apply topical fluorides during dental visits. These gels are more concentrated than the self-applied fluorides, and therefore are not needed as frequently. Some adults can benefit

from these applications. Fluoride gels can help to reduce root decay, especially in people with dry mouth.

Some people are more prone to dental decay, in which case the dentist may also advise the use of fluoride supplements in addition to fluoride toothpaste for extra protection such as fluoride mouth rinse. Good over the counter fluoride rinses are widely available at drugstores. "ACT", "Fluoriguard" and "Listerine Anti-Cavity Rinse" are a few popular and pleasant tasting choices for children as well as adults. Some fluoride rinses can only be obtained with a doctor's prescription. These fluorides have a different chemical make-up than over the counter types. The doctor might prescribe these for additional benefits beside cavity prevention such as desensitizing root surfaces and controlling chronic bleeding gums. Unfortunately, most dental insurance benefits stop reimbursing fluoride treatments after 12 years old or so.

However, fluoride is a good preventive practice for everyone's dental health no matter what their age.

—Terri

MEET OUR NEWEST TEAM MEMBER...

.....**Karen Clarke!!**

Karen joins our downtown team, as a dental assistant. She is originally from Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, is married and has a 24 year old daughter. Prior to working in the dental field, she was an engineer technician with Pratt & Whitney. Karen received her dental training at Palm Beach Community College, prior to moving to Greenville. Her hobbies include skiing, scuba diving and boating. She enjoys spending her vacation time in Florida visiting family and friends.

The Philosophy of Treating Tooth Decay

Over the years, materials, discoveries and techniques have changed, which have altered our approach to treatment. Our values do not change—that value is finding the most conservative approach.

Simply stated the more tooth structure lost, the more likely one needs a crown later in life. With advances in bonding composite restorations, tooth preparation is very precise and conservative. And, some small areas of decay can be removed without local anesthetic. The loss of tooth structure in these procedures is nearly insignificant.

Early treatment hasn't always been a conservative approach. In the days before bonding, our filling materials required bulk to be strong, and tooth preparation was more aggressive. Being conservative would mean having a tendency to watch a small cavity, because the alternative was a large filling. Although this is no longer true, sometimes you may hear us say "let's place a watch on this tooth." It means only that we suspect decay and are not sure. Knowing a patient is coming in every 6 months gives us the opportunity to closely monitor these potential findings.

Of course, preventing decay is the ultimate conservative treatment. We now have a few more tricks up our sleeve than brushing, flossing and fluoride. Decay is caused by two bacteria that infect patients sometime after birth. Most, but not all people, have these bacteria. Some people have an immune system, amongst other factors, that can keep these bacteria very low. For instance, people of Indian descent have very low incidence of decay. The bacteria, *Lactobacillus* and *Streptococcus Mutans* are the predators. Evidence suggests that we should not only remove the decay, but attempt to reduce the amount of bacteria in the mouth, by using prescription mouth rinses. The bacteria feast on sugar or carbohydrates, and they ferment an acid by-product that eats away the calcium, which eventually creates a detectable soft spot or hollow area. It can take several months before this develops into a detectable cavity. One tool we have in the prevention of cavities are sealants. Sealants can be placed on the biting surfaces of the teeth where the groovy dished-out areas are located. They cover these grooves to prevent food and bacteria from being trapped there. We expect the average sealant to last 3-4 years. However, depending on individual patient wear factors, we have seen some wear out as fast as one year, while we have seen others present for 20 years. Prior to placing the sealant we roughen the surface with sand. This also cleans off the tooth. Any microscopic undetectable decay is eradicated through the process of sand blasting and placing cleansers and disinfectants on the tooth prior to placing the sealant.

Sometimes those grooves act as little chasms or shafts that prevent us from detecting the decay that lies beneath. During the process of placing the sealant, we open those shafts up and would then detect the decay. When we actually discover decay during the process of sealing the tooth, we modify our technique. We then place what we call a minimally invasive restoration with a harder, thicker layer of composite.

Sealants won't work for the smooth surfaces of our teeth, but fortunately, recent evidence suggests being able to re-mineralize a "slightly" decayed tooth. This involves a more detailed regime of prescriptions to rinse or apply at home. Re-calcification techniques are not a guarantee of success. Often the success of these techniques relies on the patient both from the standpoint of factors they control, like "compliance" or avoiding decay enhancing foods and drinks, but also rely on factors they can't control, like the pH of the saliva or a dry mouth from lack of saliva.

Because of the recent long term studies on re-calcifying teeth, we may be recommending some home care regimes in certain cases. There will be more on the re-calcification regimes and who would be good candidates in our next newsletter.

—John R Piccione, D.D.S.

"FROM THE HEART" by Kathy Burry, Front Desk, Eastside Office

A recent conversation with a friend, made me think about Doctors Roth and Piccione. I would like to share with you, our patients, the type of people you have chosen for your dentist.

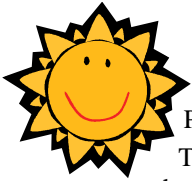
In 2005, our 19 year old son was diagnosed with Acute Myelogeneous Leukemia (AML). We fought a hard 11-month battle, but God called him home last July. During that time, the doctors and staff of Rocky Creek Dental poured out their love and support for me and my family in every way possible. I learned so much about the very people *you* trust with your dental care.

Believe me, these are people who are genuinely concerned for the welfare of others, and not just building business on making production. They are living examples of their mission statement, and are truly men and women of integrity.

RALPH BRISTOL SATURDAY SHOW

Doctors Piccione and Roth are guests from time to time on the Saturday Morning Show with Ralph Bristol. Tune in to WORD FM 1330 at 11 am on the 5th Saturday of the month (except December). Feel free to call in during the show with any dental questions you might have.

Rocky Creek Dental Care
1322 E. Washington Street
Greenville, SC 29607
Phone: 235-1200



SUMMER HOURS

Please note our summer hours will begin in June. Both offices will be open from 7:30 am to 3:00 pm.

The *Eastside* office will be open *5 days a week* to better serve the summer patient load. If you are hoping to schedule your dental visit around your vacation times, please call us now!!

RECIPE CORNER by Bonnie Todd

JACK POT PIE Serves 6

1.5 pound ground chuck

1 onion finely chopped

Cook meat and onion together until brown, then add **1 can tomato soup** and **1 can water**. Bring to a boil. Sprinkle **3 ounces egg noodles** over top and simmer 15 minutes with cover on. Add **1 can cream style corn** and **1 cup American cheese** (cut up into chunks).

Place all in a 2 quart casserole, sprinkle with **grated Parmesan cheese**. Bake 35-40 minutes at 350 degrees with cover on.

SPINACH SALAD

1 bag spinach

1/3 cup sugar

2 cups strawberries, sliced

Purple onion (med. chopped)

1 Cucumber, chopped

SALAD DRESSING

Juice of 1 lemon

2 Tbsp. white wine vinegar

1 Tablespoon canola oil

1 teaspoon poppy seeds

Combine above and serve with breadsticks, and you have a great meal!

