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The **DENTAL OFFICE**

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Check out our new WEBSITE at: <http://www.thedentaloffice.org>

TMJ Problems

Dr. Chad Brown

One question I am often asked is this: "My jaw clicks and pops when I open. Can that be fixed?" The answer is, often times, no. However, the key issue is whether or not the problem will progress to something that is very serious. A "pop" or "click", in and of itself, is not necessarily a dire situation, although it does represent a change in the physical structure of the joint. While these audible sounds may exist without symptoms of pain or inability to chew, it might be a precursor to future problems. Inside the TMJ, or the Temporomandibular Joint, there is a concave area of the skull where the end of the jaw – termed the condyle - is supposed to sit. Between the condyle and this concavity sits a disk that keeps these two parts from rubbing together - much like the knee joint where the cartilage separates the bone and provides a cushion. When you open your mouth, this disk moves with the condyle and protects it as it rotates and slides. A "pop" sound indicates that at some point in the opening and/or closing of the mouth, this disk comes off the condyle and back on when closing. This creates the sound. It usually takes trauma to the jaw, or a compromised bite, to cause this situation. Some may have a click their entire lives and never have a problem. However, others see deterioration in the joint where the disk becomes displaced and ultimately affects the teeth and the ability to chew, and may cause serious deformation of facial features. To prevent a breakdown in the joint before this takes place, we can stabilize the bite with some minor procedures and stop the progression of joint disease. If you or someone you know has this situation, it is important to make sure they are evaluated by professionals with the proper training and background to make a proper diagnosis and treat the situation appropriately. We at The Dental Office have taken many courses in this area, and would love to help. Call us today for a consultation.

Financial Options

Beth Hamill

At The Dental Office, we offer a variety of payment options. You may receive a 5% courtesy discount if you pay in full, with cash or check, on the day of service. We also take Visa or MasterCard and offer a 2% discount with day-of-appointment payment. CareCredit is an opportunity for a qualifying individual to spread the payments out, usually interest free, over a

number of months. Pre-payment is an alternative option that works for some patients. Please contact me today at The Dental Office to help you select the most comfortable payment option for you.

Importance of Fluoride

Sam Schoneman, R.D.H.

When people think of fluoride, they usually think of their child getting it when they go to the dentist in that funny-looking tray. What many people don't know is that it is just as important for adults to receive fluoride as it is for kids. It has been shown that fluoride prevents decay formation, slows down the progression of formed decay, and can even reverse cavities in their beginning stages.

Cities and towns started fluoridating their water supply back in the 1940's. I spoke with the people at the water departments in Sheldon, IA and in Rock Valley, IA, and both of these towns fluoridate their water supply. The average amount of fluoride that goes in public drinking water usually ranges from 0.7 to 1.2 parts per million (ppm). Sheldon's water supply has fluoride at a level of 1 ppm, and Rock Valley's is at 1.3 ppm. The best way to reduce the risk for tooth decay is by exposing yourself to small amounts of fluoride frequently. Ways to do this is by drinking fluoridated water and brushing your teeth twice a day with fluoridated toothpaste. Fluoride in high concentration, such as 2.0% Sodium Fluoride that you receive from your dental professional, is recommended for children and adults who have a high risk of decay. Tooth sensitivity can also be relieved with the use of topical fluoride. Parents need to be aware that too much fluoride can have an effect on children's teeth as well. Their teeth are at a crucial stage of development the first six years of their lives and if they get fluoride in too high of a dose, it can cause enamel fluorosis, which makes white spots or lines appear on their teeth. They should brush their teeth with a pea-sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste and be monitored closely. Our towns, by fluoridating our water supply, are helping to reduce the number of cavities one may experience in their lifetime.

Food For Thought

Mavis Anema

Grape Salad

In a bowl, mix 1 cup sour cream, 1 cup powdered sugar, 1 tsp. vanilla, and 1 8oz. pkg. cream cheese (softened) with a mixer. Add 4 lbs. red grapes. Mix together with a spoon.

**In celebration of our 1-year anniversary, we are offering
kids dental exams FREE for the month of March 2009!**