

Produced to improve your dental health and awareness

Fall 2008



Fall Power!
Take it back!

Whether your power lifestyle centers around a boardroom, a home office, or a nursery, oral health care can be a real challenge during the summer months. Thankfully, fall has the power to jolt us back to re-energize ... reorganize ... and reschedule!

If you've let treatment appointments slide or if you've been delaying your next preventive care appointment, you've got plenty of company. Almost 80% of baby boomers say they consider dental care to be part of their preventive health care routine, yet fewer than half visit the dentist twice a year as recommended!

Everyone today is struggling with a busy schedule. But remember: benefits from dental plans that end on December 31st are not carried forward to the next year.

Schedule a fall appointment and take back the power!

Yours in good dental health,

*Doreen DeMarco
Director of Membership
Universal Dental Plan*

turnthepage

The truth about preventing gum disease!
Omega-way-to-go!
Are you at risk for oral cancer?

To Your Advantage

Universaldentalplan.com is user-friendly

Universal Dental Plan has redesigned its web site, www.universaldentalplan.com, to help patients access affordable dental care. Our dynamic new look helps users navigate the site easily and a video on the homepage explains how the plan works.

Many Americans who are self-employed or retired don't have access to traditional dental insurance. For seniors, the cost of dentistry is of particular concern. With a longer lifespan than ever before plus a fixed income, seniors benefit significantly from Universal Dental Plan where the mission is to bring affordable dentistry to everyone.

Founded by a network of dentists and specialists on the principle that no one should be denied access to oral health care, the plan guarantees members 20-50% off all dental procedures performed by dentists,

orthodontists, periodontists, endodontists, and oral surgeons.

The reason our plan can offer such savings is the simple strategy of collective buying power. Universal Dental Plan is the affordable alternative to dental insurance without restrictions or the hassle of paperwork.

Anyone can become a plan member. It's even easier now to enroll online with their user-friendly web site. Once you're enrolled, you simply show your membership card to one of the hundreds of dentists and specialists in Massachusetts. With a fresh contemporary look, the web site has an updated directory with photos and bios of dentists.

Universal Dental Plan puts you in charge of your oral health – affordably and on your own terms.



www.universaldentalplan.com

A healthy smile will last a lifetime!



First Things First It's worth it!

Study after study shows that a nice smile is important to how others perceive you. So we're totally on board when you want cosmetic dentistry. We'd like to remind you though, that whether you're considering whitening, veneers, or restorations like crowns or implants, you need strong teeth or bones and healthy gums to get your most attractive – and *lasting* – outcome.

Brush, floss, and rinse to banish gum disease!

Early disease includes gums that...

- are red, swollen, and tender
- bleed when you brush and floss
- generate bad breath.

If left untreated gum disease can...

- progress to inflammation and chronic infections.

That can lead to...

- the loss of teeth, gum, connective tissues, and the underlying jawbone.

Let's optimize your oral health and maximize your cosmetic results!

Manage It!



Your environment can hurt your smile!

Smoking is the single major preventable risk factor for gum disease

You don't have to assume that chronological ageing will dramatically alter your smile. After all, as your dental team, we're committed to helping you maintain your oral health and most attractive appearance. But you can help by becoming aware of and managing factors in your own environment.

- Toothbrush abrasion from brushing incorrectly or with too much pressure is common and can lead to receding gums, exposed roots, and exposed yellow dentin due to thinning enamel, plus sensitive teeth, cavities, and tooth loss.
- Substituting unsafe objects like earrings, forks, and needles for dental floss can damage your gums. Frankly, toothpicks are also potentially hazardous.
- Sugary acidic drinks and sports beverages can erode enamel and create an incubating environment for the bacteria that cause tooth decay and gum disease.
- Teeth grinding and clenching can crack and wear teeth and restorations and damage gums and cheeks.
- Smoking is the single major preventable risk factor for gum disease. It also depletes Vitamin C which is preventive. Even exposure to secondhand smoke is associated with a 50-60% increased risk for developing disease.
- Untreated periodontal diseases which are infections of the gums, periodontal ligament, and alveolar (jaw) bone can destroy the appearance and health of the gums and bone and lead to tooth loss.

We can't stop the ageing process, and maintaining your beautiful and youthful smile is really a lifetime commitment. But with good care, you can keep a healthy, younger-looking smile ... for decades.



How Do They Do That?



...Naturally!

Do you think they inject Omega-3 fatty acids into *every* one of those eggs? Surprise! Actually, they alter the chickens' feed – often with pleasant-tasting ground flaxseed which is higher in Omega-3 fatty acids and lower in saturated fatty acids than other grains.

Cold water fish like herring, mackerel, and salmon are superior sources of Omega-3, but all sources, according to research, can be beneficial to your health. One caveat, though – if you opt for supplements, Omega-3s have blood-thinning potential and can interact with medications.

Did you know that Omega-3s may prevent soft tissue and bone loss associated with gum disease? Not only that, but research also suggests they may...

- improve cardiovascular health
- help brain function
- protect expectant mothers against post-partum depression
- diminish joint inflammation.

Eggscellent!

A Piece Of The Puzzle

About oral cancer

Worldwide, close to 400,000 new cases of oral cancer are diagnosed each year. If diagnosed early, oral cancer can be highly curable, and now research has provided another clue. Chronic gum disease in men may increase their risk of tongue cancer!

Even after adjusting for smoking, age, and the number of teeth, each millimeter of bone loss due to gum disease was associated with more than five times the increase in the risk of tongue cancer.

This is interesting because today more than 25% of oral cancer victims are young adults who have none of the usual risk factors like tobacco use, alcohol use, diabetes, or HIV.

Viruses and bacteria in gum tissues could be toxic to surrounding cells, or could indirectly contribute to cancer through inflammation. Please have regular periodontal and oral cancer exams.

Focus On You

Your oral and overall health matter

Imagine if a wound in your forearm became increasingly swollen and inflamed, yet was left untreated. You might worry that it would eventually affect your health. Well, your oral tissue is equal to the amount of skin between your wrist and elbow ... and many scientists believe that gum diseases, like other infections, have the potential to influence the rest of your body.

This is not a new idea. In 1891, *The Human Mouth As A Focus of Infection* proposed that oral microbes affect overall health. However, in the absence of adequate science, focal theory gradually fell out of favor. Still, the mouth-body link regained credibility when newer research was emphasized in the *Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health in America* in 2001.

Associations have been made between gum disease and heart and stroke, some cancers, diabetes, kidney disease, lung disease, Crohn's disease, Alzheimer's, osteoporosis, premature deliveries, and toxemia. The strength and precise nature of these associations are unclear. However, long-term studies and improved research designs that consider factors like age and tobacco use are creating a more complete picture.

Your mouth is a complex ecosystem harboring many kinds of bacteria. Viruses and inflammation have also been suggested as possible factors. Thus it appears unlikely that a single "gorillacillin" superdrug will present the solution.

We urge you to maintain your home care routines and your regularly scheduled visits with us to help maintain your optimal oral health.





Lifetime Teeth

Dental care for seniors

There's nothing natural about losing teeth. Teeth are lost because of dental diseases that attack our teeth and gums over time. Gum disease is responsible for more than 70% of tooth loss. Other common causes of tooth loss in adults are root cavities, root canal infections and worn out fillings. Unlike the cavities of our youth, many of these later-life problems can develop without showing any outward signs like pain or swelling.

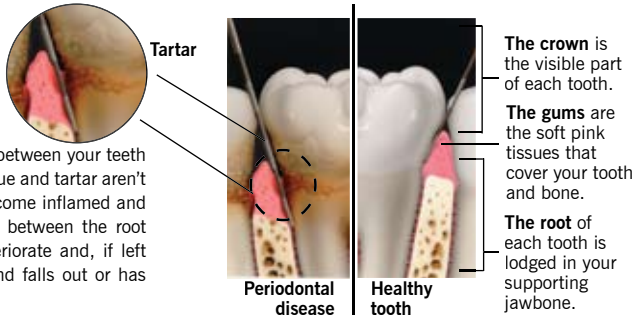
In the very early stages, gum disease can cause soreness, bleeding and puffiness where your gums meet your

teeth. As the disease progresses, the infection attacks and destroys the bone that supports your tooth. Gum disease will also cause your gums to recede and expose tooth roots to cavities and make teeth sensitive to heat and cold. This condition affects about 8 out of 10 people by age forty. Often it happens so gradually that we don't notice the changes.

Other conditions that can develop with age include Temporomandibular Joint Disorder (TMD) and oral cancers. Like most dental problems, the earlier they are diagnosed the easier they are to treat. With proper brushing and flossing, and regular trips to the dental office, there's no reason you should ever lose a tooth. You may even want to consider improving that natural smile with modern cosmetic techniques. Why not! There's a lifetime of healthy smiles ahead of you.

Periodontal Disease vs Healthy Tooth & Gums

Gingival pockets are the small spaces between your teeth and gums where debris collects. If plaque and tartar aren't removed from these pockets, gums become inflamed and the pockets of bacteria extend deeply between the root and gum. Bone and gum tissues deteriorate and, if left untreated, the tooth becomes loose and falls out or has to be removed.



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The affordable alternative to dental insurance.

Health Jeopardy

Tooth loss risks

A recent dental study has revealed that people with full or partial dentures tend to eat more processed foods and higher levels of saturated fats and cholesterol. Conversely, people with a full set of teeth generally consume fewer calories and eat more vegetables and fiber with less cholesterol and saturated fats. Why? Scientists suggest that people who have lost teeth may eat more to compensate for loss of taste or their inability to eat a variety of foods. The link between high cholesterol, high fat diets lacking in fiber, and increased risk of heart disease is well known, hence the concern for denture wearers. Diets low in fruits and vegetables have also been linked to increased cancer risk – another good reason why we should do everything we can to prevent tooth loss.

Your Referrals

Pratter

Thank you!

One of the things that some clients do – something that makes us feel great and confirms that you think we're doing a great job – is referring friends, family, and colleagues.

If we don't ask for your referrals very often, it certainly doesn't mean that we don't care. It simply means that our team doesn't want you to think that we take your recommendations for granted. We consider it an honor every time you express your trust in us by sending someone to us.

Thank you for all of your past referrals, and a special thank you in advance for your very welcome future referrals. We really do appreciate them!



Refer a friend, family member or co-worker and receive **20% off** your annual membership!