

PATIENT EDUCATION PROTOCOL

Patient Education volunteers should bring a typodont or a flip-chart in order to show proper brushing technique.

The Patient Education station can be manned by dental students, dental hygiene students, and other dental health professionals who will provide demonstration and instruction in correct brushing and flossing techniques, as well as other important oral health information.

Patient education will be located in the patient waiting areas. Patients will be directed to the area as they wait to begin the treatment process.

All patients, except the first 75-100 of the day, must participate in a Patient Education session.

Patient Education Guidelines (Patients will each receive this)

All Dental Disease is Preventable.

Dental pain and infection is avoidable by regular, thorough brushing and flossing and by being aware of the dental effects of nutritional choices.

Oral Hygiene Instruction

Brush thoroughly with a fluoride containing toothpaste at least twice a day. Clean between teeth once a day with floss. (Sulcular brushing and proper flossing demonstration)

Plaque

Teeth are covered with a sticky film of bacteria called plaque. Following a meal or snack, the bacteria release acids that break down tooth enamel. Repeated attacks result in cavities.

Plaque bacteria not only plays a role in developing cavities, but also in infecting your gums. Plaque that is not brushed away will harden over time into calculus or tartar. Tartar will collect above and below the gumline and “house” the plaque, in turn this will lead to swollen and bleeding gums and is the first stage of periodontal (gum) disease. Left untreated, this will lead to bone loss, loosening of teeth and eventually tooth loss. Tobacco users are even more likely to develop gum disease.

Nutritional Choices Matter

When teeth are frequently exposed to foods containing carbohydrates (starches and sugars) they are at a high risk of developing cavities when these sugars combine with plaque and cause an acid attack on your teeth. Examples of carbohydrate containing foods are: soda pop, sports drinks, wine, milk, candy, breads, crackers, and even fruits. Diet sodas are also destructive to teeth due to the high acid content.