

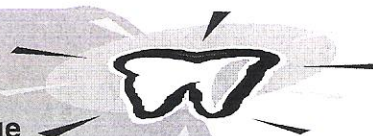
"Teeth grinding and clenching are on the rise due to our increasingly stressful and busy lives. Many patients can benefit from an occlusal guard to alleviate the damage to teeth."

Tooth grinding or bruxism is a common problem. It is reported that as much as 31% of the population suffer from bruxism. Bruxism is the excessive grinding or clenching of the teeth that is not related to the normal function of eating and talking. Several symptoms of severe bruxism are hypersensitive teeth, aching jaw muscles and headaches. In addition, patients may find damage to their teeth including chipping, broken teeth, broken crowns and fillings.

There are two types of bruxism which include sleep bruxism and awake bruxism. The dental damage may be similar in both types but the symptoms of sleep bruxism tend to be on waking and improve during the course of the day. Awake bruxism may not be present at all on waking but then worsen over the day.

Tooth wear may initially show up on the canines. The pointed surfaces will appear flatter and have a change in color. When tooth wear progresses through the enamel layer, the exposed dentin can become vulnerable to decay. Abfraction is another type of wear seen in patients who grind their teeth. A v-shaped defect or notch will appear on the outer surfaces near the gum line. This deficit is caused by excessive pressure on this part of the tooth, resulting in chipping of the thinner enamel.

Occlusal guards are usually recommended to help prevent further damage to the teeth. Patients with severe bone loss from gum disease can also be fitted for an occlusal guard to reduce destructive forces that can loosen teeth. I prefer a custom fit, hard, plastic guard for several reasons. A custom guard will fit better and more likely feel better. Hard plastic will not wear down over time like over-the-counter soft guards. The flat surface of the hard occlusal guard allows the teeth to move freely but does not allow excess pressure on any one tooth. Some patients find their jaw muscles relax slightly when wearing the guard. This may help to reduce those aching jaw muscles.



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TOOTH TALK

DR. COLONNA'S COLUMN MARCH 2014

As I write this newsletter, I have lost count of the many snow storms we have had this winter. I hope you are all well and I look forward to seeing you at your next visit.

I would like to thank the following patients for their recent referrals of family and friends. We appreciate your confidence in our office!

Thanks to Jackie DePaolo, Jodi Snyder, Lisa Gress, Mike Novak, Alice Tempel, Eva Mochol, Katrina Trinidad, Rosa Lake, William Malaquias, Karen Lurker, Patti Palfi, Fran Alencewicz, Leigh Cerami, Jason Desiderato and Kathy Gottlick.

I would like to remind everyone of our office hours. We are open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9AM to 7PM to accomodate those needing late appointments. We are also here Tuesday and Friday from 9AM to 1PM and every other Saturday from 9 AM to 2PM. We hope we can accomodate your busy schedule. -Dr. C.

Our office website is vincentcolonnadmd.com
Check us out on the internet!

"You don't have to live with chipped, yellow, aging teeth. Veneers, Crowns, Cosmetic Bonding and Whitening procedures can brighten your smile immediately."

Many patients will notice and feel changes to their teeth as they get older. One of the most common change is the color of the teeth. You may feel that the teeth look more yellow and dull in color. As we age, the outer layer enamel becomes thinner due to wear or erosion. When the enamel begins to wear down the naturally yellow dentin layer becomes visible.

Some of my recommendations follow; Avoid abrasive toothpaste that contain "whitening ingredients". I feel that these toothpastes contain abrasives that accelerate wear of the enamel. Erosion of the enamel also occurs when repeated acidic liquids are ingested.

Some of the most acidic drinks are red wine, energy drinks, and ice tea with lemonade. I would recommend limiting these drinks. You can neutralize the acid by drinking water after these beverages.

Some patients may be interested in cosmetic bonding to improve the color. In-office whitening, porcelain veneers and all porcelain crowns can also be extremely aesthetic to improve this yellowing color. Chipped teeth, especially in the front are caused by brittle enamel as we age. Bonding, veneers, and crowns can also improve these teeth.

Some individuals may note that the position of the teeth are changing. Lower front teeth especially may look more crowded or the spaces between the teeth becomes more noticeable. A small amount of movement is not unusual as we age, The bone level around the teeth may be reduced resulting in some movement of the teeth. It is imperative that at your check-up visits we monitor the movement and ensure the teeth are not loose due to periodontal disease. If the gums are swollen, bleed easily, and an abundance of plaque is present, the bone level may be reducing at an accelerated rate. Bone level loss is determined with x-rays and a complete gum exam. Gum treatment may be needed to slow down the progression of the disease.



THE TOOTH-YANK REDEMPTION

A painful toothache drove a Swedish man to break out of prison and seek a dentist - and after the offending tooth was extracted, he promptly turned himself in to the local police. "I just couldn't stand it anymore," the escapee told Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*. The prisoner, who was serving a one-month sentence, had been scheduled for release from the minimum security facility the next day. Jailers gave him a warning and extended his sentence by one more day !

- According to the AGD, the average person only brushes 50 to 75 seconds instead of the recommended two minutes.

- To celebrate Prince William's wedding to Kate Middleton, one British man had their images tattooed on his front teeth.

- The average woman smiles about 62 times a day, the average man only flashes his pearly whites about 8 times day.

- Tooth decay is the second most common disease in the United States, following the common cold.

- Chocolate causes less tooth decay than raisins or dried fruit because it doesn't stick to teeth or stay on your teeth's surface as long.