

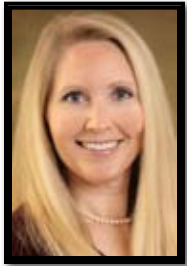
Smile! Pass It On!

Lori Ann Safar, DDS



Providing you with information for your dental & overall health and well-being

Summer 2009



Minimally Invasive Dentistry... *With Waterlase® MD*

Dental researchers and scientists are constantly inventing new ways to make our dental practice more efficient and our treatment pain-free. Our practice uses an amazing new invention called the *Waterlase® MD*.

What does it do? The Waterlase MD uses next-generation technology to perform a variety of dental procedures, including cavity preparation, caries (decay) removal, tooth etching, and a wide range of soft tissue (gum) procedures.

How does it work? The system uses laser-energized water. It significantly improves your comfort in the dentist's chair, and causes no heat or vibration in your mouth, no drilling noises, or over-heating of your teeth. Remarkably, it also treats soft tissue gently and efficiently. The highly precise spray of air and laser-energized water particles, when directed at the tooth, rapidly remove enamel, dentin, and decay.

With the Waterlase MD, most dental procedures can be performed with no pain, virtually eliminating the need for anesthesia in most cases. The laser is very precise so we can leave behind as much healthy tooth structure as possible. The Waterlase also performs numerous soft tissue (gum) procedures with little or no bleeding. Now you can have many procedures performed at our office during your regularly scheduled appointment that previously required referral to a specialist.

We're proud to be able to offer this new technology to all our patients. Please ask us about it at your next appointment!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori Ann Safar".

Lori Ann Safar, DDS

Nothing To Be Afraid Of

Dental fear and phobias

It's safe to say that few of us love going to the dentist. But for a great many of us, ducking the dentist has almost become a reflex. We cancel appointments, don't go in for checkups, and delay necessary treatment until the problem becomes more serious.

Skipping the dentist can set you up for a number of oral health problems. Without regular cleanings, your gums are more likely to break down and become diseased. Fillings can fall out and the results can leave you with unnecessary pain and discomfort. With modern anesthesia, dental procedures, even the once dreaded root canal, are discomfort-free. It's surprising that some people would still rather nurse an aching

tooth than get it healed painlessly.

Fear should not prevent you from keeping your teeth and gums healthy. Topical freezing can help to dull the prick of the anesthetic needle, while sedative gas and oral medications can help you feel warm and comfortable during the entire procedure.

Sometimes knowing it won't hurt doesn't stop the fear. The most important thing you can do to conquer your fear is to talk about it with your dentist. There are a number of relaxation techniques and distraction aids such as video and music that can help you to sit back and enjoy the ride. If you're a dentist-ducker, come on in and talk to us about it – we can help.





Plaque And Tartar

What's the difference?

Plaque is a soft, invisible bacterial film that builds up on teeth. It is formed when food, saliva and bacteria, that we all have in our mouths, decompose into a sticky film that adheres to tooth surfaces. If it isn't removed every day, plaque will irritate the gums and eventually cause decay and infection.

Tartar is a hard crystalline deposit that you can actually see on tooth surfaces. It's often yellow and very hard to remove. Tartar, also known as calculus, is formed over time when plaque is left to collect and harden, especially near the gumline. It causes gum inflammation and makes pockets in your gums where poisonous bacteria can thrive and cause infection. Tartar is so hard it can only be removed by a professional dental cleaning.

Plaque and tartar are at the root of a lot of dental problems, especially decay and gum disease. Even though plaque and tartar may look different, they do have one thing in common ... they can't stand up to daily brushing and flossing. So remember, brush at least twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and floss daily to remove plaque from between your teeth. We'll complete your plaque and tartar-fighting program during your regular checkups with a thorough dental cleaning. Keeping your mouth free of plaque and tartar is the best way to help your teeth and gums stay happy and healthy for a lifetime.

Sensitive Teeth?

Time for a checkup!

As many as one-in-four Americans experience sensitivity to temperature – a significant number considering that the discomfort can be an early detector of both minor and major dental problems.

Enamel protects the softer internal surface of our teeth from damage during chewing. It also insulates the tooth against temperature changes, allowing you to go from a hot cup of coffee to pie a la mode in seconds. If the enamel is damaged by a fracture or heavy wear from grinding, your teeth can become sensitive to temperature changes. Also, improper brushing can push the gum back from the tooth and expose the root, which can introduce sensitivity.

Sensitive teeth may also be a sign that a filling is loose or leaky, or in the worst case, it may result from a nerve infected or inflamed by decay. But don't worry if your teeth are a little sensitive just after you've had a cleaning, filling or a crown put in. That's quite normal.

We encourage patients to report tooth sensitivity right away so we can suggest an appropriate treatment. That could range from using desensitizing toothpaste or the in-operative application fluoride varnish to seal sensitive areas, all the way to a root canal treatment to remove an infected nerve.

If your teeth feel sensitive, call us! Prevention is the key to a healthy smile!



Treat now. Pay later.

Payment plans

Early treatment is the best way to save on your dental bills. It doesn't take an accountant to figure out that it's better to pay a little for early prevention than thousands of dollars for complex repairs later on that may not even save your teeth in the end. It's a simple rule of thumb: the worse the damage in your mouth the more the trouble for your bank account. And no matter what the health of your bank balance, high-quality dental care can be workable for everyone. Depending on your needs, we can help you put together a deferred payment schedule. Credit cards can also be a useful way to finance dental care. No matter how you look at it, the bottom line looks better the earlier you get treated. So don't wait ... it will cost you.

A Parent's Guide...

To dental emergencies

Some 14% of children will experience a dental emergency of some kind, so it's important to have a proper action plan prepared should an emergency happen. Here are some common emergencies and how you can handle them.

Toothache – The pain of a toothache can be sharp and piercing, or more generalized and throbbing – usually due to tooth decay. Pain will likely become worse instead of better. For temporary relief, hold a warm cloth against your child's cheek. If the area around the tooth is swollen, you can also use a cool compress intermittently.

Chipped Or Broken Tooth – The best way to manage tooth fractures is to prevent them. For any sport where there's risk of contact with another player, or any surface, everyone should wear a professionally fitted mouthguard. If a tooth does get chipped or broken, use warm water to rinse off as much dirt as possible.

Knocked Out Tooth – Have your child bite on some gauze or a clean cloth to stop bleeding. For a permanent tooth, gently rinse it, remove the gauze, and try to place the tooth back in its socket, and come to us immediately! If that's not possible, submerge the tooth in milk.

In all dental emergencies, it is crucial that your child gets to our practice as quickly as possible. We can evaluate the extent of the injury, and make necessary repairs quickly and safely.



Make Our Day

Patient referrals

Surrounded by the busy hum of an active, dental practice, it's easy to think that there's no room for new patients. Nothing could be further from the truth. We love our work, and part of that is the excitement of getting to know new patients, as well as the satisfaction of successfully providing dental care for long-term clients.

When you refer your friends, colleagues, or family to our office, it makes our day. It shows that our dedication to our patients' oral health has been noticed.

Please accept our sincere thanks for every referral who becomes a patient of our practice because of you. Make sure that when they make their first appointment, they mention your name – we'd really like to thank you in person! Thank you for your confidence.

Calcium: How Much Is Enough?

Your teeth and gums need the same good nutrition as the rest of your body. Any balanced diet isn't complete without calcium, the main nutritional mineral needed for building strong teeth and bones. Regardless of your age, calcium provides many benefits.

Medical discoveries link the prevention of osteoporosis (a bone-weakening disease most common among senior adults) with a nourishing diet that includes regular calcium intake and daily exercise. But how much calcium do you need for a lifetime of healthy teeth and bones? Are you getting enough in your everyday meals or should you consider taking supplements?

The most effective amount for adults ranges from 800-1200 mg of calcium a day combined with a good exercise program. Remember that vitamin C is

essential for healthy gums, vitamin A in forming tooth enamel, and vitamin D for helping your body absorb calcium.

Calcium is especially important for growing children. We recommend 500 mg a day of calcium for kids up to three years of age; 600 mg for children aged 4-6; and 700 mg for those 7-9 years old.

Many things we eat and drink have calcium in them, with dairy products usually being your best source. Adults can get their recommended daily amount by drinking three to four glasses of milk, or an equivalent measure of yogurt or cheese (1½ ounces of cheese equals an eight-ounce glass of milk). You can also add milk or cream to soups, sauces, and desserts. If you can't tolerate dairy foods, many products like orange juice, are now fortified with calcium. Fresh vegetables



such as broccoli and collard greens, and canned seafood like sardines and salmon are also high in calcium.

If you're not sure you're getting enough calcium, please ask us. We can suggest ways to achieve the calcium intake that's right for you.

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Smile For A Lifetime

Dental care for seniors

It's a common myth that as we get older we will lose some teeth and eventually end up with dentures. The reality is that with proper care and maintenance, your teeth can last as long as you do.

Teeth are lost because of dental diseases that attack our teeth and gums over time. Gum disease is the number-one cause of tooth loss in adults. Other causes are root cavities, root canal infections, and worn out fillings.

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 gum soreness, bleeding, and puffiness. As the disease progresses, the infection attacks and destroys the bone that supports your tooth, plus it causes gums to recede and expose tooth roots to cavities and make teeth sensitive to heat and cold.

There are a number of other conditions that can develop with age such as temporomandibular joint (TMJ) problems and oral cancers. Like most dental problems, the earlier they are diagnosed the easier they are to treat. That's why regular dental checkups are even more important as we get older.

With proper brushing and flossing, and regular dental appointments, 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!