

New Town Dental Arts News

February, 2011

Sinusitis Got You Down?

During the winter months and at other times when the air is very dry, it is important to keep our nasal passages moist. An easy way to do this is to sniff salt solution into both sides of the nose 2-4 times a day. To prepare a solution of proper strength, add 1/4 teaspoon of table salt to a cup of warm water, and stir it until all the salt has dissolved. Sniff some from a spoon or other small container into each nostril. Alternatively, you can buy ready-prepared nasal saline products, such as Ocean, Simply Saline or generic equivalents from drug stores. Such solutions can be used to wash away mucus from the membranous lining of the nasal passages. They also help by shrinking any parts of it that are swollen. If this is not done, mucus and the swollen membranes around these openings may block openings of the sinuses into the nasal passages. Sinusitis will then occur if nasal bacteria infect the mucus, which can no longer drain from the blocked sinus. Treatment of sinusitis (rather than its prevention) often requires the use of antibiotics.

Some doctors are not enthusiastic about nasal saline irrigation since researchers found that it does not significantly reduce the incidence of colds. However, do not confuse colds with sinusitis. Viruses cause colds, while sinusitis is a bacterial-induced complication for some colds. Irrigation of the nasal passages with saline cannot kill viruses or bacteria, but it does help to reduce the incidence of sinusitis in people with a tendency to develop this common complication of colds.

Sources: American Family Physician (70:1685 & 1697, "04) & Wall Street Journal (Dec.7"04, page D6).

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Dental Health From Birth To Age 3

- **Baby Bottle Nipples**

Usually, we like to see your child for their first check-up at about age 2 - 3 years, when all their primary [deciduous] teeth have erupted. However, there are many measures that you as parents can take before this time to insure good oral health. To begin, if mom is not going to breast feed, the type of nipple used on the bottle can have a definite effect on the growth of the jaws and development of muscles and swallowing patterns. The NUK nipple has an optimal shape that fits the anatomy of your babys mouth. Upon first sight, many parents assume that its funny shape and size will cause the baby to reject it, and thus, shy away from using it. Try the NUK nipple for a few days. Most babies will accept it readily. Using the NUK will lessen the chance of your baby developing a colicky stomach and may prevent certain orthodontic conditions that

wont become evident until your child is much older.

- **Fluoride**

Perhaps, the most predictable and consistent preventive measure in dentistry is the ingestion of systemic [enters the blood stream] fluoride up to about age 14. The incorporation of fluoride into the tooth enamel allows the tooth to be more resistant to demineralization by acid and ensuing tooth decay. If your water district doesnt add fluoride to the water supply, your baby should be receiving fluoride drops of a fluoride/vitamin combination as soon as possible after birth. The first permanent molars are already calcifying by age 3 months. It is in this formative stage that the tooth will incorporate the greatest amount of fluoride. Studies have shown that fluoride will not cross the placental barrier, so pregnant woman no longer receive fluoride preparations. Systemic fluoride [at 1 part per million] is a safe and effective way to dramatically reduce dental decay, along with the cost of dental treatment. Please call our office to learn if your water is fluoridated, and if not, we will be able to prescribe the proper dosage.

- **Teething**

On the average a baby will start to get their first teeth at about six months. Teething [tooth eruption] can cause discomfort for your baby, as well as many sleepless nights for you. During teething periods, your baby may exhibit excess drooling, runny noses, low-grade temperature and/or overall crankiness. To help this situation, you may purchase some 2 by 2 inch gauze pads at your pharmacy and lightly rub your babys gums with them several times a day. This will remove a thin layer of plaque that forms on their gums, thus lessening eruption pain. Most babies will find this massaging very soothing, and some will derive pleasure from sucking on the gauze or your finger. A clean teeth ring to chew on may also be helpful. Teething gels or ointments that will temporarily numb your babys gums and reduce discomfort are available at your pharmacist.

- **Nursing Bottle Syndrome**

Many parents give their babies a bottle in bed to pacify him/her and enable them to fall asleep. Most people fill the bottle with milk, formula, fruit juice or water mixed with a sweetening agent such as Kayro syrup or honey. Unfortunately, as your baby falls asleep, the tongue and nipple on the bottle pool the liquid around certain teeth. The acidic and/or sugar content of these liquids can cause severe tooth decay. This is called nursing bottle or baby bottle syndrome. Dont allow your baby to become a dental cripple before his/her first check-up. If you must give them a bottle in bed, be sure to fill it only with plain water.

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Considering Dental Implants?

Important Facts to Help Make Your Decision

Many people are unaware of the consequences of losing their teeth or the effects of wearing partial or full dentures upon their jaws and bones. When teeth are lost, the surrounding bone immediately begins to shrink [atrophy]. Implant treatment, for tooth replacement therapy, can be the optimal treatment plan. Here are some important facts to take into consideration.

- Wearing dentures [plates] accelerates bone loss, and old dentures become loose because of

this bone loss. It is possible to watch and wait for bone to disappear to the point where treatment success of any kind is in doubt.

- At the end of a five-year period, only 40% are still wearing the original partial denture made for them. This is not a great testimonial for value and utility. Those lucky enough to have a functioning partial denture after 5 years are still losing valuable supporting bone.
- Of those patients who wear a partial denture, 50% chew better without it.
- One study showed that after 8 years, 40% of the supporting teeth [abutments] that the partial hooks onto were lost through tooth decay or fracture.
- Patients with natural teeth can bite with about 200 pounds of force. Denture wearers can bite with approximately 50 pounds of force. Those wearing dentures for 15 years or more can bite with only about 6 pounds of force, and their diet and eating habits have had to be modified accordingly.
- The average lower full denture shifts from side to side during chewing and is a significant problem that new denture wearers must get use to and accept.
- Denture wearers have decreased nutritional intake, a ten year shorter life span, and 30% of denture wearers can only eat soft foods.
- The single tooth implant success rate is above 98%, and unlike a bridge, the teeth adjacent to the implant are no more at risk than if no teeth were missing.
- Implant-supported bridges or dentures have 95% success rates over 10 years without the severe loss of supporting bone.

For bone maintenance, the health of adjacent teeth, the longevity of the restoration and patient comfort, implant therapy is the treatment of choice. Implants can restore chewing function to the equivalent of someone with natural teeth. If you have questions or want to know if you are a good candidate for implant tooth replacement therapy, please call our office.