

General Dentistry

Dental Exam

The secret to a bright, healthy smile is actually no secret at all: brush, floss and get a professional dental exam at least once every six months. Professional dental exams are all about prevention – preventing existing problems from getting worse and preventing dental problems from developing in the future. Regular dental exams make it possible to identify and treat a problem in its earliest stage – which is not only good for your oral health but also good for your budget!

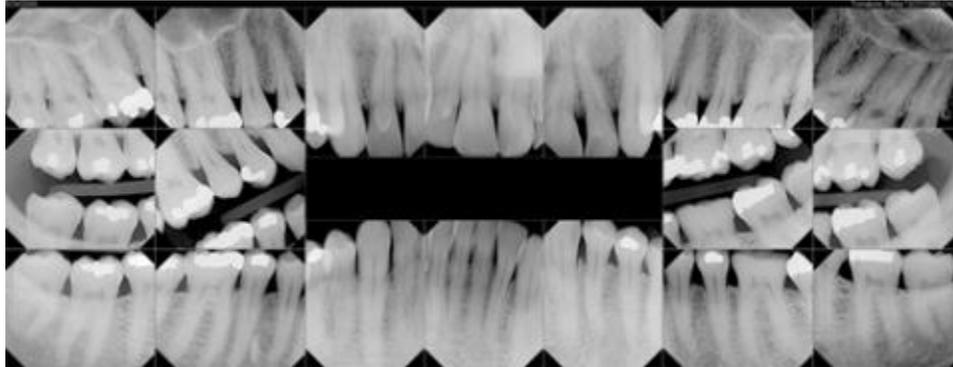


There's nothing to fear with a dental exam. Your teeth will be visually examined for signs of plaque, tartar and tooth decay. Your gums will also be examined for puffiness or discoloration, which are signs of gum disease. A full set of dental X-rays may also be taken during your dental exam, to enable your dentist to see below the surfaces of your teeth. Dental exams typically end with a dental cleaning, to remove surface stains and buildup.

Dental X-Ray

Dental X-rays have come a long way. Today's dental X-rays are safer, faster, more comfortable and more informative than the X-rays of years past. Digital X-rays, one of the latest and most advanced dental technologies, produce high-quality images of your teeth that can be viewed instantly by you and your dentist on a LCD monitor. Digital X-rays reduce radiation by up to 90% and provide exceptional diagnostic information to ensure that potential problems are caught in their earliest stages. Intraoral photography is another alternative to traditional dental X-rays. With intraoral photography, problems

such as cavities, fractures and discolorations in the teeth are captured through clear and sharp photographic images that are taken with a 35mm or digital camera.



Teeth Cleaning

No matter how often you brush and floss, plaque and tartar deposits can still build up on your teeth. A professional teeth cleaning is the single most effective way to remove these deposits and prevent them from causing more serious problems in the future. While a traditional teeth cleaning involves manually scraping away these deposits with special dental tools, advances in dental technologies now give you more options for teeth cleanings.



A laser teeth cleaning, also known as an ultrasonic cleaning, is a popular alternative to traditional teeth cleanings. With a laser teeth cleaning, an ultrasonic scaler (rather than a manual probe) is used to remove deposits, kill harmful microbes and eliminate bacteria around the teeth and gums through high-frequency sound waves. Many patients find laser teeth cleanings more comfortable than traditional teeth cleanings because they are quicker, quieter and pain-free.

A deep cleaning may be recommended if excessive plaque and tartar deposits have developed below the gum line. Deep cleanings, also known as scaling and root planing, involve a two-part process: first, the stubborn deposits are removed, and then the root

surfaces are smoothed. A deep cleaning helps prevent periodontal disease and restores gum tissues to a healthy state.

Oral Cancer Screening

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Oral cancer affects nearly 35,000 Americans every year. The keys to surviving oral cancer are early detection and early treatment. This starts with a regular oral cancer screening – at least once every six months. An oral cancer screening takes just minutes, is pain-free and can be performed during regular dental exams. If you are male, a regular oral cancer screening is especially critical: Oral cancer is more than twice as common in men as it is in women. Other people at high risk of oral cancer include people over the age of 60, tobacco smokers and heavy drinkers.



Dental Fillings

If you've been told you need a dental filling, you're not alone: 92% of Americans have had at least one cavity. Dental fillings are the tried-and-true treatment for treating cavities – and they come in a variety of options to suit every need. Dental fillings can be made of silver amalgam, composite, porcelain and even gold. Amalgam fillings have been used by dentists for more than a century and are still the most common and cost-effective type of dental filling. But composite fillings, which are made of a tooth-colored plastic and glass composite, are quickly becoming the preferred dental filling due to their natural appearance and durability. The type of dental filling used is determined by a number of factors, including size and location of the cavity, as well as your budget.

White Fillings



If your silver fillings make you feel self-conscious when you smile, or it's simply time to replace them, consider white fillings. White fillings are just as durable as they are attractive! Made of composite resin, white fillings match the natural color of your teeth and are an excellent option for small to mid-sized cavities. White fillings are strong, stain-resistant and require less removal of your tooth structure than amalgam fillings.

Dental Crowns

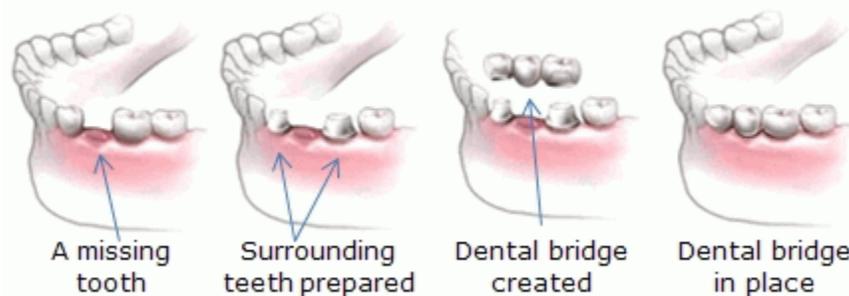
A dental crown may not make you feel like royalty, but it is one of the premiere treatments for teeth with extensive decay or damage. Dental crowns can also be used to hold a dental bridge in place, cover misshapen or severely discolored teeth, or cover a tooth after a root canal procedure. Made of either porcelain-fused-to-metal, ceramic or gold, dental crowns are placed during a multi-step process and sometimes require more than one dental visit. The first step is a dental impression. A temporary crown is then placed to protect the tooth while the impression is sent to an offsite laboratory to create the final restoration. In some cases, same-day crowns are possible, so be sure to inquire. With good oral hygiene and minimal wear and tear, your beautiful new dental crowns can last up to 15 years.



Dental Bridges

Dental bridges have been used for centuries to replace missing teeth. Today, dental bridges are still considered one of the most durable, conservative and cost-effective options for bridging the gap between a missing tooth and surrounding teeth. Comprised of two anchoring teeth and a replacement tooth, dental bridges help prevent surrounding teeth from drifting out of position, improve chewing and speaking, and help keep your natural face shape in tact.

The Dental Bridge Procedure



There are three types of dental bridges: 1) traditional dental bridges, 2) cantilever dental bridges, and 3) Maryland bridges. Traditional bridges have either dental crowns or dental implants on either side of the missing tooth, plus a replacement tooth, which is held in place by a post-like structure called a dental abutment. Cantilever dental bridges are used in cases where there are surrounding teeth only on one side of the missing tooth. Maryland bridges are made of a specialized resin that is cemented to a metal framework and cemented to the enamel of surrounding teeth.

Dental bridges typically take 2-3 weeks to complete and are less invasive than other options, such as dental implants. With good oral hygiene and regular dental visits, dental bridges can last up to 30 years.

Dentures

Using dentures to replace missing teeth is not only great for your oral health; it's a great way to look and feel younger! Today, there are a variety of natural-looking and comfortable dentures for patients who need to replace missing teeth. Made of a gum-colored plastic resin or acrylic base and either resin or porcelain replacement teeth, dentures are custom designed to fit your mouth. If you have several teeth or all teeth missing on the upper or lower jaw, full dentures may be your best option. Partial dentures, which can be either fixed or removable, are great for patients who have several missing teeth scattered along the upper or lower jaw.

The process of getting dentures may take a few months and several dental visits. In some cases, however, same-day dentures are also possible. With same-day dentures,

the dentures are created right in the dentist's office instead of at an offsite laboratory. Same-day dentures aren't for everyone, though. If your dentures require a lot of customization, same-day dentures may not be right for you.



Just as with your natural teeth, dentures require daily maintenance. With regular wear and tear, your dentures can last 5-7 years. During that time, you may need periodic denture relines to accommodate changes in the contours of your mouth. Regular denture relines involve resurfacing the base to ensure that your dentures fit and function perfectly. If you break your dentures, it's critical to bring them to your dentist for professional denture repair. Home denture repair kits can cause more damage and be even more costly to fix.

Invisalign Braces

When it comes to “invisible” braces, Invisalign braces are the gold standard. Unlike traditional dental braces, which use brackets and wires to straighten teeth, Invisalign braces use a custom-made series of clear plastic aligners that are completely removable. The comfort and convenience of Invisalign braces are unbeatable. You can eat whatever you want; you can remove Invisalign braces whenever you need to; and you can brush and floss more effectively. Invisalign braces are effective for patients who have problems with crowding, spacing, crossbites, overbites and underbites.

Gum Disease Treatment

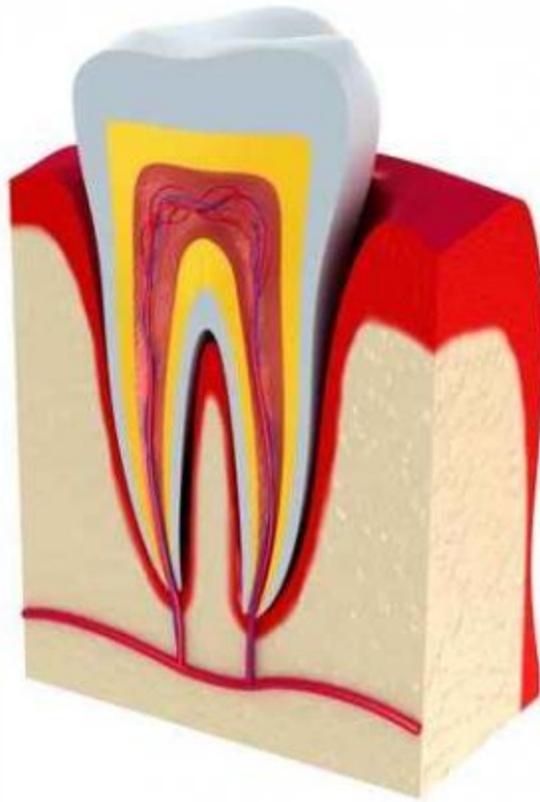
Red, swollen gums are a red flag for one thing: gum disease. If you have the symptoms, you're not alone. More than 80% of adults have some form of gum disease. Fortunately, there are many effective and pain-free gum disease treatments. For gingivitis, the mildest form of gum disease, treatment typically involves a thorough dental cleaning, followed by daily brushing and flossing. Advanced gum disease, also known as periodontal disease, requires scaling and root planing to remove stubborn deposits

below the gum line. Laser gum surgery, a new alternative to scaling and root planing, uses beams of high-speed light to remove plaque and tartar buildup. If non-surgical methods of gum disease treatment are ineffective, a gingivectomy, or periodontal surgery, may be necessary.



Endodontics

Root canals get a bad wrap. But don't believe the rumors; the dreaded root canal isn't dreadful at all! Root canals are needed when either decay or an injury infects the inner tooth (the pulp). In the earliest stages of infection, you may not feel any pain at all. But when it progresses, you could have a toothache and swelling, or a dental abscess might form. Root canals remove the infection and prevent it from spreading. Thanks to laser root canals, this process is faster, more comfortable and, in many cases, more thorough than conventional root canals. Pulp capping is an alternative to root canals that are used when the infection has yet to penetrate the pulp. Pulp capping can also prevent a large dental filling from getting too close to the nerve.



Oral Surgery

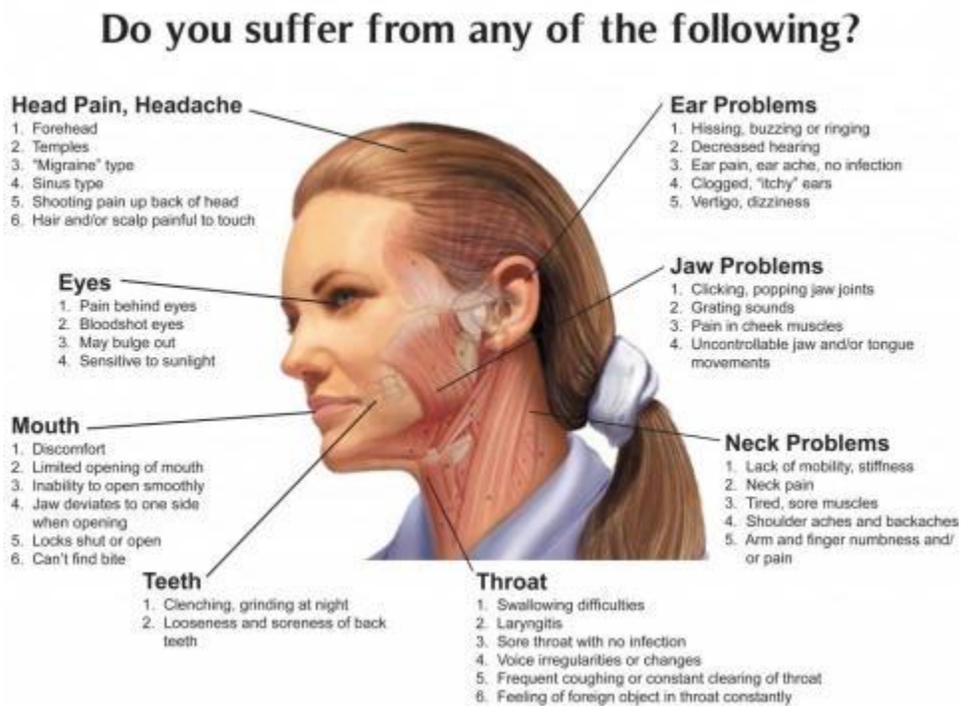


Oral surgery is an umbrella term for surgical treatments such as dental implants, wisdom teeth extractions and bone grafting. Dental implants, an excellent solution for missing teeth, are surgically placed tooth roots that hold dental crowns in place. A wisdom tooth extraction may be recommended if there isn't enough room in your mouth to accommodate wisdom teeth and they become impacted, partially erupted or infected. Bone grafting transfers bone from one part of the jaw to another, usually to

accommodate a dental implant. While a general dentist can perform some oral surgery procedures, an oral surgeon is required for others.

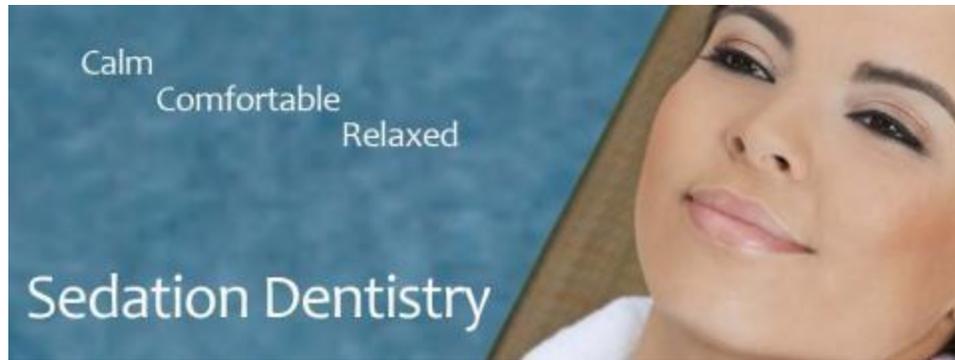
TMJ Treatment

If you've been living with persistent jaw pain, ear pain and headaches, you could have TMJ – temporomandibular jaw disorder. TMJ can often be traced back to an improper bite, misaligned jaw joints, or an injury to the jaw or face. TMJ treatment from a dentist can relieve the discomfort. Although TMJ treatment varies from patient to patient, it typically involves one or several procedures, including the use of an orthotic splint, enamel reshaping, dental crowns, dental braces or night guards. The goal of TMJ treatment is to stabilize your bite so that your teeth, jaw muscles and jaw joints work properly together without strain – and without pain!



Sedation Dentistry

Ever wish you could sail through dental visits without anxiety or fear? Would you rather endure an agonizing toothache than go to the dentist? Answering "yes" to these questions could mean that you're a perfect candidate for sedation dentistry. With sedation dentistry, you can forget about fear and focus on pure relaxation.



There are different levels of sedation to accommodate every patient. Minimal sedation involves inhaling nitrous oxide (“laughing gas”). Nitrous oxide helps you relax and wears off quickly. Electronic anesthesia is an alternative form of mild sedation that uses electronic impulses to help you relax. Conscious sedation is a moderate level of sedation that causes drowsiness and is taken in pill form. IV deep sedation is typically administered intravenously and works very quickly. With IV deep sedation, most patients fall asleep but can be easily awakened. Total sedation could be the only solution for people with an intense fear or phobia of dentistry. With total sedation, or general anesthesia, you are completely unconscious and cannot be easily awakened.

Pediatric Dentistry

Catering to the dental needs of kids requires a special touch. Pediatric dentists are specially trained to treat the oral health needs of children, from infancy through their teenage years. This involves in-depth knowledge about children's behavior, as well as their growth and development. Pediatric dental offices are also designed to make kids feel comfortable and relaxed – with plenty of toys, activities and a warm, inviting and fun décor.



Sleep Apnea

