



Ralph R. Bozell, D.D.S.

(734) 451-0995

Dentistry by Appointment

# Focus on Oral Health

Produced for the patients of Ralph R. Bozell, D.D.S.

Summer 2009

## DENTAL TEAM

**Receptionist/  
Office Manager:**  
Cynthia Luke

**Dental Assistant:**  
Carol Alsobrooks

**Hygienists:**  
Ann Ferguson  
Jeanine Lowe  
Kathy Schroeter

## Oral infections— nothing to smile about

An infection in the mouth is no laughing matter. A mouth infection can cause discomfort; inflammation; difficulty opening the mouth, swallowing, and speaking; fever; and inability to control saliva. Doesn't sound like fun, does it?

Oral infections can be caused by a number of factors, including infections related to periodontal disease, an infection of the inner pulp of a tooth which has spread, or a partially erupted wisdom tooth. Wisdom teeth that break through the gums provide an area for bacteria to accumulate, which can sometimes lead to infection.

Unchecked, oral infections can spread into the head and neck, necessitating treatment with antibiotics, possibly surgery, or even hospitalization. The purpose of surgery is to stop the infection at its source by removing the affected tooth. In other cases, draining the area and testing the infected material that is removed may be done to determine the type of bacteria involved and prescribe a drug to treat it. If the infection has caused swelling in the throat, hospitalization may be necessary to keep the airway open.

To avoid measures such as surgery, report early signs of infection—redness, swelling, and pain—to your dentist. When treated early, the complications of serious infections can often be avoided.

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## Tooth decay EXPOSED

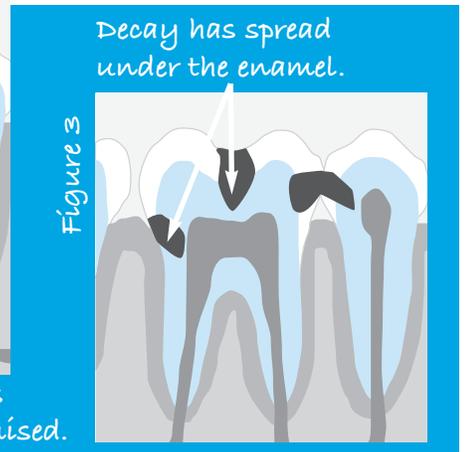
The very first sign of dental caries is usually an area of the tooth that appears compromised. These may appear on the chewing surface or between teeth. If we notice a weakened area during an examination, we may recommend fluoride treatments to protect the tooth.

If the compromised area is not treated, the decay may spread through the enamel and into the dentin. Because the dentin is relatively soft compared to enamel, decay spreads more

rapidly when it reaches this part of the tooth.

Once the bacteria that cause decay reach the dentin, they tend to continue their destructive path following the dentinal tubules that travel from the

enamel toward the roots of the tooth. Once the pulp of the tooth has been compromised, an abscess may form. When the cavity reaches this stage, root canal treatment may be necessary to save the tooth.





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7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

**Appointment and Emergency**

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## ALL THE BENEFITS OF BONDING

Bonding (adhesive dentistry) has been used in dental offices for several decades now, and this technique has a proven track record of improving smiles and changing lives.

You may think of bonding as a way to close gaps between front teeth, but there are many more uses for this versatile cosmetic procedure. A bonding procedure can be used to create a restoration that looks completely natural. Teeth that are chipped, cracked, or pointed can be repaired. Short teeth can be made to appear longer, and discolored teeth can look lighter. Bonding material can also be used to protect the exposed roots of teeth.

In addition to producing beautiful smiles, bonding can be done quickly—in as little as 30 minutes per tooth—and without discomfort. Anesthesia is seldom necessary, except when bonding is used in conjunction with a restoration.

Imagine a changed look in only a few dental appointments—a grin you can feel confident about. That smile you've been dreaming of can be yours when you take advantage of all the benefits of bonding.

***Thank you for all your referrals. We appreciate them!***