

# Where Illinois Smiles

AUTUMN 2003



www.WhereIllinoisSmiles.com

1972 Larkin Ave., Elgin IL 60123

For Confident Smiles

(847) 741-2353

## New Warnings About Silver Filling Material

**r**ecent legislation has been introduced or enacted in Arizona, California, Colorado, Maine, Minnesota, New York, and Vermont requiring dentists to post "warnings" regarding the use of amalgam. Amalgam, the silver material used for fillings, has also been banned by these states for children and pregnant women due to its mercury content.

Years ago, our office chose to drastically reduce the use of amalgam due to the controversy surrounding this material. At the time, the Environmental Protection Agency set forth disposal requirements that amalgam material be treated as "toxic waste". We felt amalgam could have the potential to impact the well-being of our patients. Therefore, we implemented a policy strongly suggesting the use of only non-amalgam material in our practice.

In addition to your protection, non-amalgam (porcelain, composite and gold) material is superior in its ability to bond to teeth, helping to prevent new decay. While amalgam has a tendency to expand, which can cause fractures in teeth, porcelain, composite, and gold materials do not expand and help to strengthen teeth.

The National Institute of Dental & Craniofacial Research is conducting clinical trials on amalgam safety in children, with results available in 2005. We will continue to keep you informed of legislation that affects Illinois dental practices.

### Arrange Year-End Appointments SOON!

To take advantage of unused insurance benefits before the end of the calendar year, many patients



arrange treatment in November and December. Because the schedule fills quickly at this time, please make your appointments as early as possible.

Because some treatments require more than one appointment to complete, we will try to arrange appointments to ensure treatment is concluded at a designated point so you receive maximum coverage.

### New Patients Are Always Welcome!

We are always pleased to welcome new patients to our office. Your recommendations to others are always appreciated.

Thank you!

### The Repercussions Of Missing Teeth

Tooth loss has many frustrations. Dentures contribute to discomfort, reduced confidence, decreased ability to chew, and daily inconvenience.

Unfortunately, many acknowledge these ordeals as "normal", unaware that an underlying occurrence has even greater impact ... bone loss. Over time, bone loss contributes to deep wrinkling and a sunken-in appearance around the mouth, a "witches chin", jowls, and a severe reduction in biting strength.

When tooth roots are missing from the upper or lower jaw, the bone begins to shrink, or resorb. This resorption continues and is even accelerated by the pressure of dentures. An indicator of bone loss is the change in the fit of your denture. Dentures that once fit securely will begin to loosen due to the change in the bone underneath the gum. As the bone shrinks, the ridge under the denture slowly flattens. This gives the denture less of a foundation, decreasing one's ability to bite and chew comfortably. Biting strength of natural teeth is 250 lbs. A denture wearer bites with 5 to 6 lbs.

Emotional repercussions are equally as severe. With decreased self-esteem and

confidence, denture wearers tend to unplug from society, don't look at people in the face, smile and laugh less, don't leave home often, wear no make-up, and eat out rarely.

There is a solution. Dental Implants recreate the presence of tooth roots, halting bone loss and restoring the strength of your bite. There are many types of implants designed to accommodate individual needs. For those who have lost a great deal of bone depth, there are procedures that can rebuild the bone to a healthy depth.

Dental Implants are designed to last a lifetime. When properly selected, placed, and cared for, they will bring you as much pleasure and satisfaction as natural teeth. To discuss your options in tooth replacement, call (847) 741-2353 for a consultation appointment with Dr. Rice.

## Dr. Rice Elevated To Professional Mentor Status



Dr. David Rice

**d**r. David Rice recently completed a three-day course in diagnosis and treatment planning for restorative dentistry. "Creating Restorative Excellence", held at the Center For Advanced Dental Learning in Seattle, was an extensive program on the use of esthetics, function, biology and biomechanics to create the most successful outcome for patients.

In addition to appearance and bite alignment, Dr. Rice studied the latest techniques for optimal unity of structure and biology.

Completion of this course, along with previous training at the Center,

has elevated Dr. Rice to "Mentor" status, an achievement of less than 80

dentists worldwide. Mentor status allows other dentists to have access to Dr. Rice on areas relating to restorative dentistry.

Dr. Rice states, "With profound developments in today's dentistry, I am pleased to share my knowledge with others in the dental field. This broadens the ability for every individual to enjoy optimal oral health."

### Sit Back, Relax, Smile!

For every visit to our office, your comfort is a high priority. While today's dentistry offers exceptional comfort options, some still experience high levels of anxiety. To alleviate these concerns, we offer:

- Medication taken prior to visits
- Stereo Headphones to listen to your favorite relaxing music
- Virtual reality movies to view during your visit
- Blankets and Lavender Pillows

If you or someone you know would like to discuss these options, call (847) 741-2353 or ask at your next visit.

# A Site To Behold!

You are invited to visit our Web Site at:  
[www.WhereIllinoisSmiles.com](http://www.WhereIllinoisSmiles.com)

This site gives you access to our practice 24/7. Here, you can review various services while we keep you up-to-date on the latest happenings in the practice and in dentistry.

You can also e-mail us directly from the site with suggestions, questions about dental procedures, or even request a consultation.

If you know others who would benefit from the care we provide, please mention this site. We are always pleased to spread the news on optimal oral health and a confident smile.

**See you in cyberspace!**

## IS YOUR MOUTH DRY?

### A DRY MOUTH CAN DAMAGE YOUR TEETH AND RUIN YOUR BREATH!

Without adequate saliva to lubricate your mouth, wash away food, and neutralize acids produced by plaque, the risk of cavities greatly increases. Other problems include a constant sore throat, difficulty swallowing, hoarseness, and dry nasal passages.

Often, a side effect of antihistamines, decongestants, pain killers, and high blood

medications that are less drying. Chewing sugar-free gum (especially with xylitol sweeteners) also stimulate saliva to reduce the risk of decay. Oral rinses can replace moisture in the mouth.

Please mention any new medications you have begun taking since your medical history form was last completed. Dr. Rice adds, "This information helps to unify your oral well-being with your overall health."

pressure medications is dry mouth. Even beverages such as coffee and those containing alcohol can inhibit saliva flow. "A normal part of the aging process is a reduction of saliva," states Dr. David Rice, "along with decreasing our sense of taste and smell."

To keep your mouth moist, Dr. Rice suggests sipping plenty of water during the day. Your physician may be able to suggest



*"As a child, the gap between my front teeth didn't bother me. As an adult, it does. Can this be repaired without braces?"*

### Answered by Dr. David Rice

As with any patient, it is necessary to first diagnose what caused the gap to occur. Assuming that gum disease did not contribute to tooth movement, there are several ways to repair a gap between your front teeth.

Depending upon the width of the gap, bonding may be the easiest method to close the space. In this process, a tooth-colored resin material is applied to the teeth. Shading is carefully matched and the surface is polished to give a natural appearance. This is the least expensive method; however, bonding, particularly on front "biting" teeth, is more vulnerable to chipping or breaking than with porcelain veneers.

Porcelain veneers are custom-designed "shells" that are attached to the front of teeth. Veneers give the most durable, natural feel and appearance possible, even reflecting light as a natural tooth. This method also requires minimal disruption to the natural tooth, although the design of the veneer can reshape or resize the tooth for a more flattering look.

If teeth are badly turned or misshapen, porcelain crowns can be used to close the space. This method requires the existing tooth to be reshaped to accept a custom-designed crown. The crown covers the top and sides of the tooth, while protecting the natural tooth portion underneath. Crowns, like veneers, give excellent longevity and have natural appeal.

If the space is wide, other front teeth may need to be involved in treatment. This keeps the teeth visible in your smile to balanced proportions. Otherwise, you could end up with two, very wide front teeth that close the gap but doesn't result in an appealing smile.

After an examination, we can determine which option will give you the best results. You also learn the process and fee involved. Once you understand the choices, you have already taken the first step to regain a smile you'll love!

## Helpful Dental Tips For Arthritis Sufferers

If you are an arthritis sufferer, you are twice as likely to develop periodontal (gum) disease. Gum disease is the country's main cause of tooth loss and has been linked to serious health problems, including heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and memory loss. Findings published by the Journal of Periodontology recently stated patients with rheumatoid arthritis (RA) had an average tooth loss of 11.6 teeth compared to 6.7 teeth of other participants.

RA is the leading cause of disability, limiting the daily activities of over 7

million Americans. Because we are sensitive to the physical limitations RA can cause, the following tips may make oral hygiene at home easier.

- Water irrigators can remove food particles and plaque between teeth.

- Electric toothbrushes and floss holders can reduce the effort required by the hands.

- Wrap toothbrush handles with a sponge hair roller to create a more comfortable, thicker grip.

- Replace knob-type faucets with levers, which are easier to turn.

- Since insufficient saliva increases the risk of bacterial growth, drink

plenty of water to keep your mouth moist.

- If you are taking medications that are drying, oral rinses are available to help maintain oral moisture. Also, limit caffeine, alcohol, and smoking, all which are drying to oral tissues.

With a good oral care commitment, RA sufferers should be able to maintain a healthy smile and prevent tooth loss. If you suffer with arthritis, overcoming the physical limitations to protect your smile will result in a constant reminder that you are in charge of your health!