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### SNOW "WHITE" MONTHS

As time leads us into our fall and winter season, our team would like to extend a very special offer on our whitening products.

The holiday parties, family gatherings and New Year resolutions are quickly approaching us all. Here at our office we wanted to celebrate this upcoming winter season by making things exciting for our patients.

Our team will be dedicating November and December 2007 as our Snow "White" months. Our patients can celebrate with us, by enjoying a savings on all of our whitening products, including ZOOM!®. Please call our office for more details. Hurry before the calendar changes to 2008!

### YOUR DENTAL HYGIENE APPOINTMENT

By RDH staff members *Marcos Eisenberg, Goretti Allenbach and Donna Counts*

#### Beginning of visit: Your dental concerns

"Do you have any areas that are bothering you?" If you are experiencing any symptoms such as pain, broken teeth and/or sore areas in your mouth, the hygienist wants to discuss and note these concerns. The hygienist will bring your concerns to Dr. Patricia's attention and during your visit she will stop in to examine you. The beginning of your appointment is a good time to ask about whitening or any other procedures that you may have questions about.

**Medical history:** "Are there any changes in your medical history since your last visit?"

Once your dental concerns are addressed, the hygienist will review your medical history. Updating your medical history is very important to us. Your health status and current medications can affect your dental care. Your confidential information is recorded, along with your updated blood pressure reading. We strive for the safest and most successful dental health results.

#### Oral Cancer Review

During your visit the hygienist will evaluate your lips, tongue, cheeks and gums for any signs of abnormal "lumps or bumps." If there is an area of concern, Dr. Patricia will evaluate the area and may refer you to an oral surgeon for further evaluation. This screening occurs at every visit. If you have noticed something unusual in your mouth, please be sure to let the hygienist know during the visit as well.

#### X-rays

Check-up x-rays are taken based upon your individual situation. For many patients 14-24 months is the common interval. A patient who is at a higher risk for cavities or periodontal (gum) disease may require more frequent x-rays.

#### Periodontal Probing

Gums that show signs of:

- bleeding
- redness
- puffiness
- sponginess

may indicate periodontal disease. The hygienist measures with a special instrument called a "probe." Periodontal prob-

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ing is when pocket depths are recorded. 1-3 mm pocket depths are considered a healthy range. All pocket depths 4 mm and higher are areas of concern. If found, the hygienist will then present options on how to improve these areas.

### Treatment

At times confusion occurs when defining the difference between routine periodontal maintenance vs. routine prophylaxis, and we would like to clarify.

With regard to periodontal probing, patients who have areas of 4 mm pocket depths or more may present early to severe bone loss and moderate to extensive calculus requiring non-surgical periodontal therapy and at times surgical therapy.

Once this treatment is complete a patient will be considered a periodontal maintenance patient. Dr. Patricia and our hygienist will monitor their progress. With our patient's compliance and more frequent visits, we will work together towards periodontal stability and routine maintenance.

Patients who present with no periodontal (gum) disease and who are within normal pocket depth range will require a prophylaxis which consists of removing tartar, polishing the teeth and flossing.

During your visit the hygienist will recommend different at home care products to assist you in achieving optimal dental health; for example, a prescription for fluoride toothpaste may be issued.

The hygienist may also recommend treatments that can be accomplished during that day's visit. Examples are antibiotic treatment that can be placed in deeper pockets, or applying a fluoride

varnish to protect root surfaces, existing crowns and fillings from decay.

### End of visit: "Do you have any more questions?"

Once your visit comes to a close we want to make sure that you have a good understanding of your dental health status. Further, we want to make sure that we've answered and addressed all of your questions and concerns. The final step of your dental visit is to schedule future appointments.

We have the highest regard for our patients oral and overall health, and want their comprehensive visit to be not "just a cleaning" but a customized experience that optimizes their dental health care.

### DON'T LOSE OUT: USE YOUR DENTAL BENEFITS BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR

As we near the end of 2007 and get busy in the planning and celebration of the holidays, we encourage you to do one simple thing that will be a true 'gift' to yourself and your family members—take advantage of your remaining dental benefits before the end of the year.

If you have treatment that has been diagnosed but is not complete, or if you would simply like to come in for your annual exam, please call us to schedule an appointment now. Remember you must schedule AND complete your treatment before the end of the year or your 2007 benefit value will be lost, so acting quickly is very important.

If left unattended or undetected, dental problems do not get better, and will almost surely require more extensive

and costly treatment in the future.

As always, our goal is to help you attain, and maintain, the best dental health possible. Please call to make an appointment today.

### DON'T FORGET ABOUT OUR "CARE ENOUGH TO SHARE" REFERRAL PROGRAM

To thank those of you who think of us when referring family and friends for dental care, please ask for a "Care Enough to Share" certificate next time you're in the office. New patients you refer to our office will receive \$25 off their first office visit when they present their *Care Enough to Share Certificate*. You, too, will receive a \$25 credit on your account as our way of saying "thank you".



### MEET OUR STAFF

If at any time you have questions for any member of our staff, please call!

Patricia Westerhout, DDS  
Paola Guglielmoni, DDS (Periodontist)  
Goretti Allenbach, RDH  
Donna Counts, RDH  
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Brigitte Macedo, Financial Coordinator  
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