



from the office of
GATOR DENTAL ASSOCIATES, PA

Gator Tales NEWSLETTER

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A FOND FAREWELL TO DR. PERIU

We would like to wish good luck to Dr. Lie-Ying Periu, as she and her husband, Daniel, move back to her hometown of Melbourne, Florida, to start a dental practice. She exemplifies caring and skill — two qualities that make a great dentist and made her a special part of our team at Gator Dental. We will miss her and know she will be a wonderful addition to the Brevard County Dental community.

▲ Drs. Garlitz and Hackenberg are here to serve your dental needs. Dr. Garlitz has been treating patients in Hawthorne since 1982. He and his family live in Hawthorne. Dr. Hackenberg has been in the office since 2005. She and her sister live in Gainesville. (Her sister will be a 2008 UF Pharmacy grad.) Both doctors will be available for Friday hours, thus continuing the extra hours that Dr. Periu offered.

MAKE YOUR SUMMER GLOW

Summer is here and what better way to show off a “summer glow” than with whiter, brighter teeth! Teeth whitening can take away stains caused by dark foods and aging. For your convenience, we offer three options so you can achieve your whitest smile. Professional in-office whitening gives you whiter teeth in about an hour. Professional at-home whitening al-

▲ lows you to whiten on your schedule, while still achieving stunning results. We now also offer the choice of Crest Professional Whitestrips, twice the whitening power of the “drugstore” strips, with all the convenience. Call to schedule your appointment today to give yourself a smile you can’t help but show off!

A SENSITIVE ISSUE? WE CAN HELP!

Summer heat got you beat? Sensitive teeth preventing you from enjoying a cool treat? We now offer (for in-office purchase) Soothe Rx and Control Rx — a prescription for reducing sensitivity by solving the problem, not just masking the symptoms, as most over-the-counter products do. Sensitivity is commonly a result of root exposure, or receding gums, of which there are many causes. Some factors that may contribute to gum recession are tooth

▲ wear from clenching and grinding, gum or periodontal disease, and acidic foods. Deep cleaning, or scaling and root planing, removes harmful tartar, calculus, and debris that covers, or “insulates,” exposed roots, resulting in increased sensation. If you feel this may be your concern, please call to schedule an appointment. If you regularly see Judy or Sandie, ask if Soothe Rx is right for you.

MEDICATIONS ALERT

With new medications hitting the market, we need to stay on top of studies that may affect your health.

FOSAMAX, and other similar drugs (known as bisphosphonates) that enhance bone density, may risk a very rare but alarming side effect: “jawbone death” or osteonecrosis of the jaw (ONJ.) The problem seems to arise mainly after patients (predominantly cancer patients receiving the drugs intravenously and some patients tak-

▲ ing pills — Fosamax or, less commonly, Actonel — for osteoporosis) undergo an invasive dental procedure such as tooth extraction. Therefore, patients taking bisphosphonates should alert their dental professionals.

▲ Always remember to update your medications list at every appointment. It is very important that your medical or dental professional be aware of *any* changes in your health status.

NEWS BITES

Melissa Cassels will be graduated from the Dental Assisting program at Santa Fe Community College in August. Melissa will be rejoining our team as a Dental Assistant.

Tyler Wright, son of Hygienist *Judy Wright*, graduated from Hawthorne High School in June. Tyler plans to attend Santa Fe Community College. Judy’s son, *Troy*, graduated from Santa Fe Community College in April and will attend University of Central Florida in the fall, pursuing a degree in Aeronautical Engineering.

Chad Ellis, grandson of Business Associate *Debi Mike*, graduated from Eastside High School. Chad is working at Ward’s Supermarket in Gainesville and is considering moving to Pennsylvania.

Scott West, son of Office Manager *Suzanne West*, was married on July 1st to Miranda Menasco of Chiefland; they plan to live in Gainesville. In the fall, Miranda will be teaching math at Westwood Middle School and Scott will begin Nursing School prerequisites at Santa Fe Community College. Suzanne’s eldest son, *Daniel*, begins his second year with the Navy in Norfolk, VA. He just returned from operations in the Baltic Sea where he enjoyed side trips to port cities in Switzerland, Germany, and Poland. He is currently working on his qualifications for Surface Warfare Officer on the USS Vella Gulf.

Dr. Garlitz continues to teach and lecture part-time, in addition seeing patients in our office. Dr. Garlitz also serves as Hawthorne Lions Club President. This important club supports the needs of Hawthorne residents in funding eyeglasses, corrective eye care, and school scholarships. He would love to have you as a guest at a meeting. Call the office for information.

GUM DISEASE: "A SILENT THREAT"

Gum infections harm more than just mouths. While mild gum infections, called gingivitis, may lead to red and swollen gums, they're not especially dangerous by themselves. But they can worsen into periodontitis — painless but chronic gum infections that, if left untreated, degrade bony sockets and ligaments that hold teeth in place. The immune system fights gum infections to keep oral bacteria from spreading to other parts of the body. It usually succeeds, but not always. Gum disease bacteria can enter the bloodstream and move to the heart, creating life-threatening infections in previously damaged heart valves. What's more, scientists believe the resulting inflammation releases infection-fighting compounds that can inadvertently damage other tissues.

The arteries may be the most common target. People with periodontitis were twice as likely to die from a heart attack and three times as likely to die from a stroke, according to a study that examined 18 years of medical histories for 1,147 people. Steven Offenbacher, director of the Center for Oral and Systemic

Diseases at the University of North Carolina School of Dentistry, who co-authored the study, is helping conduct another to see if treating periodontitis in heart patients will cut the risk of heart attacks.



Pregnant women with serious periodontal disease have about four times the risk of delivering pre-term babies, and they face an increased risk of preeclampsia, in which blood pressure climbs sky-high after the 20th week, threatening the lives of both mother and fetus. In an early clinical trial, researchers found that treating seriously infected gums reduces pre-term births five fold, but the work needs to be confirmed in larger trials.

Have we scared you enough yet? Here's the point: Everyone is vulnerable, because bacteria that routinely lurk in the mouth cause tooth decay and gum disease. The problem: Most people don't know they have these

infections; they often cause no pain and few symptoms, but can lead to far worse. Gum disease may also heighten the risk for heart disease, diabetes, pneumonia, and premature birth, according to recent clinical trials. But the good news is that with good old regular brushing and flossing, you may prevent all that. And by seeing your dentist often, you can nip most problems in the bud.

Regular dental checkups can pay off in other ways too. For example, dentists can spot signs of diabetes, heart disease and cancer, along with a variety of rare skin and autoimmune diseases. Since people typically visit their dentists more often than they visit other doctors, that can lead to early diagnosis and early treatment — all of which means that your dentist can do much more than save your teeth and gums...your dentist can save your life.

Information about Periodontal Disease as excerpted from an article entitled "A Silent Threat" (Reader's Digest, December 2005)



COSMETIC, FAMILY & RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY

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THANKS FOR INCREASING OUR POPULARITY!



YOUR GATOR DENTAL TEAM

Thank you for your referrals. Your confidence and support in sending your friends and family is a big compliment. Because of your dedication, we are a busy and popular office. Please share our newsletter and Web site, www.gatordental.com, with your friends and family.

When making appointments, please select a reserved time that is convenient for you. Dental reservations allow us to match the correct team member and appointment time, allowing us to meet your health needs with the greatest of expertise and comfort. With all our effort made on your behalf, it is very important to not change your appointment time unless it is an emergency.

Please be sure our team has your cell phone number and e-mail address on file. We use this information to improve your choices by contacting you with premium appointment times that become available on short notice.