

# Back To School Time: Put Your Best Smile Forward

Back to school time is a challenge even for the most organized family. There are lots of new tasks and responsibilities, and getting into the groove of the school year can take some time.

But make sure one thing doesn't get lost in the shuffle—the time to take care of your teeth.



And we're talking to both children AND parents. With a lot more to do, it's easy to take shortcuts with routines that you're used to—especially brushing your teeth.

The American Dental Association recommends spending at least three minutes a day brushing your teeth. That's not much time, but many people spend less than one minute a day on brushing.

The time savings is negligible, but the impact on your smile can be tremendous. And costly.

To avoid shortchanging your toothbrush (and your teeth), we recommend a couple of things:

1. Make it a family affair. Set a time where the whole family brushes before bed or after breakfast. This is good for a couple of reasons. It reinforces to the kids that this is something everyone must do, and it lets you monitor just how long everyone is actually brushing.
2. Get everyone a new toothbrush. Kids have new clothes and new school supplies that help them focus on their

new routines, so why not a new brush to get them to pay a little more attention to their teeth at the same time?

A little extra effort at the beginning of the school year could help strengthen dental hygiene habits that can benefit your family for a lifetime.

**New to Charlotte...need a dentist....Charlotte Dentistry can assist you.....visit [www.charlottedentistry.com](http://www.charlottedentistry.com) request a *new patient cleaning* today!**

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## **You Might “Like” Seeing Our Facebook Page**

If you haven't visited our page on Facebook, we invite you to take a quick look.

More than 1,400 have “liked” us, and we'd love to add you to that list. Plus, our page includes tips on taking care of your teeth, contests where you can win prizes large and small, and comments from Charlotte Dentistry patients on their experiences with us.

Our online community of friends is growing, and we'd love to include you. Click here: [www.facebook.com/CharlotteDentist](http://www.facebook.com/CharlotteDentist).



# Tooth Discoloration: Several Options to Brighten Your Smile

Your teeth can become discolored for many reasons, from slight injury or affects of medication. Fortunately, there are now a number of options for bringing your smile back to bright white.



Teeth Whitening treatments can be a starting point. **Charlotte**

**Dentistry** offers two professional whitening approaches – **Zoom!, an in-office treatment**, and Sheer White, a treatment you can do at home.

**The Zoom! whitening method is one of the most efficient ways to get a bright, white smile.** Zoom! works in 60 minutes and last longer than at home whitening treatments, depending on your eating or drinking habits. Zoom! has been proven to whiten teeth as much as 6-8 shades with just one treatment.

If you'd prefer a whitening treatment you can do at home, then we offer Sheer White. Sheer White uses thin, flexible films that apply easily and mold to your teeth, staying in place. This film molds tightly and applies the whitening agent directly to the surface of the tooth, unlike over-the-counter treatments that can wash out or leak. Both systems are fast, painless, and a great way to get good results.

If whitening treatments do not produce the results desired, then tooth veneers can be an effective option. Veneers are almost impossible to stain. Porcelain veneers have the same luster of your natural tooth enamel, so people may never know you've had them applied. And they provide essentially instant results.

Precise custom craftsmanship of tooth veneers is a must. **Our on-site dental lab allows us to provide the most accurate coloring, shaping and fit for your veneers.** And should the dentist think a last-second adjustment is needed before they are applied, this can be done, without having to wait for the veneer to be shipped to and returned from a distant lab.

**To learn more about your options for fixing discolored teeth, call us for an appointment.**

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# Accidents Happen: How We Help You Recover

An accident can mean something as simple as a small chip in a tooth, or significant damage to your teeth and jaw. Charlotte Dentistry has the staff and experience to handle any kind repair or reconstruction.



Small chips may simply require a filling or bonding and some shaping to restore the tooth to normal. For bigger problems, tooth veneers or crowns can recreate your original smile. If an accident costs you some of your teeth, partials or dentures can be custom crafted so that you look like yourself again.

With custom-crafted dentures, it can be possible to contour the new teeth to fit facial characteristics precisely. This may be especially important for younger patients who may lose teeth through an accident or other unusual situations.

That's one tremendous advantage of **Charlotte Dentistry's in-house lab**. Because we craft veneers, crowns, and dentures on site, without having to send them out, *we can make even the smallest adjustments to help ensure a perfect fit right in the in-house lab*. And these small adjustments are ones that can make a big difference in the patient's life.

So if you have an accident that damages your teeth, don't worry. There are plenty of options available to help. Even if you broke or lost a tooth sometime in the past, we can still show you options to restore your smile.

**Call us for an appointment, and we'll show you how we can help you get your smile back.**

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## . . . And the Ride Goes On: The Latest From Taquana

*Taquana “Tabby” Sears, a Charlotte Dentistry patient, has agreed to share her Invisalign experience with us on a regular basis. For the last several months, she’s given us reports on how she’s doing with Invisalign, including ups and downs. Below is her latest blog entry.*



Before Invisalign Treatment



Currently During Invisalign Treatment

Last month I mentioned that I didn't have an upper tray for #12. In addition to not having an upper tray, my lower tray was extremely thin. I'm not sure why it was so thin. I'm so used to my bottom trays being difficult to put on. These, however, popped right in. It was so thin, it even started to crack during the 2 weeks wearing them. Needless to say I was excited about getting new trays during my next visit. So you know what that means...new trays equals tightness! Since I have been wearing the same upper trays for 4 weeks, and my bottom trays weren't tight at all, these new trays are a little

uncomfortable. I guess since my teeth haven't moved in a few weeks, they're a little stubborn!

This visit, I picked up trays 13-15. During this visit, 4 more attachments were added. Attachments are little tooth-colored "buttons" to help the trays grip your teeth. They also assist the more difficult teeth to rotate the right way. Now I have a total of 12 attachments. It feels strange if you're not used to them. However, you don't feel them at all if your trays are in. Also during this visit, updated pictures were taken. So please stay tuned! They should be posted soon!

Before I started this journey, I used to cover my mouth every time I smiled or laughed. Now I'm proud to say, I no longer cover my mouth. In these short 5 months, I smile with confidence. I'm even comfortable with showing people my "before" pictures. Everyone who sees my before pictures are amazed at my progress. I definitely recommend Invisalign for anyone wanting to strengthen their teeth! You get a beautiful smile without the hassle of metal wires and rubber bands!

Please continue to follow my 18-month Invisalign ride. I will be glad to answer any questions you may have.

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## **Interesting (And Fun) Dental Facts, Part Two**

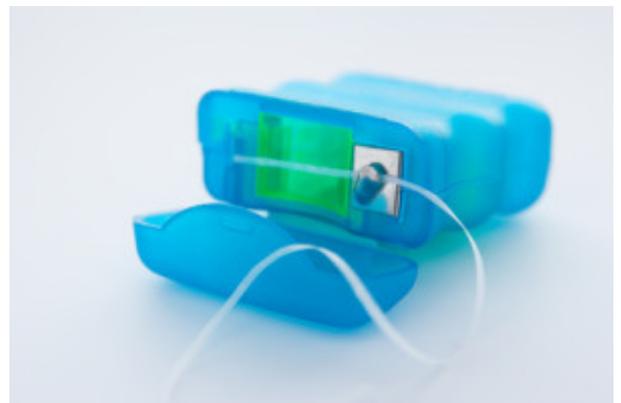


- Sports, accidents and fights are the primary cause of tooth loss in folk below the age of 35. Play it conservatively and wear a mouth guard.
- Every day the typical person spends 8.5 hours sleeping, one hour eating, 7.2 minutes volunteering and only fifty seconds brushing his or her teeth. Set your alarm two minutes earlier and slide in some additional brush time. Dentists advocate two to three minutes.
- American citizens spend \$100 billion each year on hair care treatments and only \$2 billion a year on oral care products. What good is great hair without a great grin?
- Next time you need to play hooky, head to the dentist for a cleaning as an alternative. Last year alone, adults missed over 164 million hours of work and youngsters missed over 51 million hours of college for dental related issues. Use your time wisely!
- If flossing correctly, the average individual should use 122 yards of floss every year. Twenty-eight per cent of folks claim to floss daily, but yearly sales information indicate only eighteen yards of floss are sold per person.
- “Spearmint Sparkle” “Peppermint Breeze.” “**Eggshell Shine?**” Next time your dental hygienist asks you pick a flavor, remember what the Romans used to scrub their teeth – a mixture of bones, eggshells and oyster shells mixed with honey. We think the paste will win out every time!
- Let’s all scrub together now: The average toothbrush has

around 2500 bristles grouped into about forty tufts.

- In contrast to common belief, George Washington's famous dentures were not made of wood. His four pairs of custom chompers were made from gold, ivory, lead and a mix of human, mule and hippopotamus teeth. Look after yours and it'll be unnecessary to resort to this! (Reference: [http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/6875436/ns/technology\\_and\\_science-science/t/george-washingtons-false-teeth-not-wooden/](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/6875436/ns/technology_and_science-science/t/george-washingtons-false-teeth-not-wooden/))
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## Interesting (And Fun) Dental Facts



- American citizens cite halitosis (bad breath) as the worst characteristic a workmate can have. Be more favored round the water cooler—brush after lunch.
- Cap the toothpaste although not the brush. Covering the brush can trap moisture and inspire bacteria expansion. (Gross, huh?)
- The average female grins about 62 times each day, while the average male grins only eight times. Ladies are also more likely to clean their pearly whites and visit the dentist frequently. Think there could be a connection

here?

- MacGyver claims dental floss works very well as a cake cutter, temporary clothesline, picture hangers, replacement fishing line and lots more. Our favorite use for dental floss? Cleaning your teeth! Nice invention!
- Dental floss has played a part in several tried jail breaks, used as everything from a rope to a chainsaw. None have achieved success. We suggest sticking to its original use—flossing.
- Bottled water does not contain the tooth-decay fighting fluoride, which is added to most community water supplies. Ditch the bottle and drink from the tap.
- Saliva helps you eat by breaking apart particles of food and cleaning your mouth later. The regular person produces ten thousand gallons of spit over their lifetime (no information as to how much winds up as spitballs).

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## Beat the Heat—But Save Your Teeth

On hot days, few things are more tempting than cold, refreshing snacks and drinks. But while cool treats might be picking you up, the sugar in them could be taking your teeth down.



Sugar contributes to plaque and encourages acid-generating bacteria that eat away at your teeth's enamel. Children are especially vulnerable, so it's important to look at healthy snack options that can provide great refreshment, but not harm your smile.

One great alternative ice cream or other sugary snacks is an American summertime favorite: Watermelon. It can be served ice cold, helps replenish fluids that you might lose while enjoying the outdoors, and is naturally low in calories.

And you can also challenge your friends to a seed spitting contest.

There are also a variety of sugar free or low sugar ice creams and popsicles now on the market, and while these might not be quite as healthy a choice as fruits, they do help you cut down on sugar.

But we know that there are times when resistance is futile, and there's nothing you want more than a bowl or cone of rich, sweet, honest-to-goodness ice cream. When you do indulge, also do this: brush as soon as you can afterwards. Brushing helps get rid of the sugary residue, and helps stop the creation of decay-causing bacteria.

Enjoy your summer, but be cool about being cool: Remember to take care of your smile.

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## **Reasons to Wear a Protective Dental Mouthguard**

One of the most significant functions of mouthguards is to keep your teeth from breaking. If your tooth does fracture, it sometimes can be saved, but a proper mouthguard can help prevent breaks from happening in the first place.



Mouthguards also defend against tooth displacement. For example, if a baseball hits you hard in the mouth, it may not break your teeth, but it can move them out of alignment. If you're wearing a mouthguard, the blow is cushioned and the force is distributed more evenly, so one tooth doesn't bear the brunt of the force.

Mouthguards help prevent teeth from being knocked out. No one wants this, obviously, and mouthguards have kept many a tooth in their users' mouths. Guards also defend against soft tissue wounds. It is not uncommon for athletes to bite through their bottom lips, requiring stitches. Wearing a mouthguard can easily eliminate this type injury. It can also prevent wounds to your tongue and cheeks.

Mouthguards might even defend against concussions. There's some discussion on this issue. Those that say that mouthguards can help stop concussions suggest that the extra padding between the mandible and the maxilla could reduce the force of the mandible pushing up on the skull close to the brain, which could set off a concussion. Other brain surgeons aren't so sure, since no direct studies have been done, but Dr. Cantu, an expert on concussions, notes that in any case, mouthguards "do forestall wounds to the teeth so I would suggest all collision-sports players wear mouth guards."

Mouthguards can also defend against jaw splinters and jaw breaks. When you receive a blow to the head and your teeth

contact one another, there's not too much room for flexibility. The mouthguard offers a layer of flexible plastic between the teeth and acts as padding to save the jaw from fracturing. Jaw splinters frequently need major surgery, so the simple prevention of wearing a mouthguard may prevent major problems from an injury.

Most often, the reasons people give for not wearing a mouthguard are either related to the bother of wearing one (which is pretty minimal) or peer pressure to NOT wear one. But should an injury to your teeth happen, you'll find the "bother and peer pressure" will be the least of your concerns.

We suggest you review this site for an athletic mouthguard:  
<http://www.shockdoctor.com/products/mouthguards.aspx>

It's a good, cost-effective option for costly custom made mouthguards.

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## **Bad Breath Embarrassing You? Here Are Some Fixes**

Halitosis breath, medically called *bad breath*, can come from poor dental health habits and could be an indication of other health issues. Bad breath may also be made even worse by the sorts of foods you eat or an unhealthy approach to life habits.

### ***How Does What You Eat Affect***

***Breath?*** The food you eat starts to get broken down in your mouth. As foods are digested and soaked up into your arteries, they're ultimately carried to your lungs and given off in your breath. If you eat foods with robust odors like garlic or onions, brushing and flossing –

even mouthwash – simply cover up the odor briefly. The odor won't depart fully till the foodstuffs have passed thru your body.



***Why Do Poor Habits Cause Bad Breath?*** If you do not brush and floss your teeth daily, food particles can stay in your mouth. This promotes bacteria growth between teeth, around the gums and on the tongue. The bacteria growth is the cause of the bad odor. Odor-causing bacteria can also cause bad breath if dentures aren't properly cleaned. Smoking or gnawing tobacco-based products may also cause bad breath—not to mention stain teeth, cut back your capability to taste foods, and irritate the gums.

***What Health Issues Are Linked With Bad Breath?*** Bad breath or a bad taste in your mouth might be danger signs of gum (periodontal) illness. Gum illness is due to the accretion of plaque on teeth. The bacteria cause poisons to form in the mouth, which irritate the gums. If gum illness continues untreated, it can damage your gums and jawbone. Other dental factors behind bad breath include poorly fitting dental appliances, fungal infections, and dental caries. The medical problem dry mouth (also called xerostomia) may also cause halitosis. Saliva is critical to dampen and clean the mouth by neutralizing acids produced by plaque and washing away dead cells that build up on the tongue, gums, and cheeks. If not removed, these cells decay and may cause halitosis.

***What Can I Do to Stop Bad Breath?*** Halitosis can be reduced or forestalled if you practice good oral cleanliness by brushing after each meal with fluoride toothpaste. (Don't forget to clean your tongue, too.) Replace your toothbrush every three months and after an illness such as sore throat or bronchitis. Floss after each brushing. Dentures should be thoroughly cleaned daily.

Be sure to see your dentist twice a year. He will conduct an oral exam, provide a professional teeth cleaning. He will likely notice and treat periodontal illness, dry mouth or other issues that could cause bad breath. Again, if you smoke or use tobacco products, ask your dentist for tips to kick the habit. Drink lots of water. Try sugarless gum or hard sugarless candy to assist in the production of saliva, which helps wash away particles of food and bacteria. If you suspect the things that you eat might be causing your bad breath, record what you eat. Review the list with your dentist for potential foods to stop eating. Likewise, start a list of the medicines you take. Some medicines can cause mouth odors.

***Who Provides Professional Treatment For Halitosis?*** Usually, your dentist can treat the root of halitosis. If the odor is due to gum illness, your dentist may treat the illness or refer you to a gum specialist (periodontist).

***What Products Can Get Rid of Bad Breath?*** You can purchase a mouthwash over the counter to mask the odor. Nevertheless take into account that many mouthwashes usually provide a short term way to hide upsetting mouth odor. There are nonetheless, a few antiseptic mouth-rinse products available that actually kill the germs that cause halitosis.

Ask your dentist which product might work best for you.