Table of Contents

1) What’s Different About StarBrite Dental Cleanings
2) Brushing
3) Flossing
4) Importance of Regular Exams
5) What a Dental X-ray Can Really Tell Your Dentist
6) The Hygienist
7) Homecare for Periodontal Disease
8) Nutrition and Health
9) Soft Drinks and Your Health
10) Bruxism
11) Electric Toothbrush
12) What Your Dental Hygiene Appointment Means to Me
13) Dr. Seifi Top Dentist 2009-2015

Presented To: ________________________________________________

Date: ________________________________________________________
What’s Different About StarBrite Dental Cleanings

Your hygiene appointments at StarBrite Dental usually take about an hour, which is a little bit more than the average hygiene appointment lasting 30-45 minutes. In this time your hygienist works quite efficiently to not only deliver a comprehensive and thorough dental cleaning

The hygienist also takes care to cover the following procedures as well:

• Oral cancer screening
• Gum tissue response test for bleeding and signs of gum disease
• Checks bone levels below the gums to isolate any areas of bone loss which could be signs of gum disease
• Home care instructions
• Patient Education

One of the main benefits from this appointment is you learn how to maintain proper at-home oral care in between hygiene visits which helps prevent most major dental issues. As a step further on repeat hygiene appointments persistent home care areas that are causing trouble are isolated and improved through further patient education on a case by case basis.

Additionally, you are offered any needed dental products that would help assist you to maintain your oral health fully from over the counter items, like electric toothbrushes to prescription mouth rinses and fluoride toothpastes.

There are other key benefits:

• Detection of early signs of oral cancer, bone loss and periodontal disease.
• Patient education on nutrition and habits that may be effecting your oral health.
Whether you use a manual toothbrush or an electric toothbrush, proper tooth brushing involves these things:

The proper tools
A soft toothbrush
A soft brush is kinder to your teeth and gums, and also makes it much easier to remove the plaque below the gumline, where periodontal disease starts.

Toothpaste with fluoride
Use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste that contains fluoride. Fluoride hardens the outer enamel layer of the teeth. It might stop a cavity in its tracks and will give you more resistance to future cavities.

The right technique
The correct angle of brushing
Angle the bristles of the brush along the gumline at a 45-degree angle and apply gentle pressure so the bristles slide under the gumline. Vibrate the brush while you move it in short back-and-forth strokes and in small circular motions. Brush two or three teeth at a time, and then move to the next teeth, allowing some overlap. To brush the backs of the front teeth, tilt the brush and use the tip of the brush.

Brushing in a pattern
It’s fine to brush in any regular pattern you choose, but since the insides of the teeth tend to get less attention, you might start with the insides of the upper teeth, then go to the insides of the lower teeth. Next, switch to the outsides of the upper teeth, and then the outsides of the lower teeth. Brush the chewing surfaces of the upper teeth, then the lower teeth, and end by gently brushing your tongue and the roof of your mouth. This removes bacteria and keeps your breath fresh.

Good timing
Brushing after breakfast and before bed
The timing of your brushing is important, too. Brushing after breakfast cleans away the morning’s food debris, and prevents the bacteria that naturally live in your mouth from leaving behind the destructive acid they produce when they digest that food. And brushing your teeth before bedtime protects your teeth all night.

Using these brushing techniques, your teeth and gums will stay fresh and healthy.
Flossing

Why flossing important?
Most cavities and periodontal disease begin between the teeth. While brushing is important, the bristles of your toothbrush simply don’t remove plaque and bacteria from between the teeth. That’s why we recommend that you floss every day.

How to floss
Don’t worry about the type of floss; they all work pretty much the same. Choose the type of floss you like.

Wind 18 inches of floss around the middle fingers of each hand, leaving about five inches between your hands. Pinch the floss between your thumbs and index fingers, and leave about one inch in between to work with.

Gently guide the floss down between the teeth using a side-to-side motion.

If your teeth are too tight to floss, or if it catches or tears, let us know about it. These are problems that need to be fixed.

Pull the floss tightly in a C-shape around the side of the tooth and slide it under the gumline. Clean the surface of the tooth by moving the floss up and down several times to remove all the food and bacteria. Then pull the floss around the next tooth and repeat the process. Wind the floss to a fresh section and gradually work your way around your mouth, cleaning both sides of every tooth. If you have problems reaching some areas, you may want to use a floss fork.

If your gums are infected, they’ll bleed when you floss. That’s to be expected if you are just beginning to floss. After a week or so of regular flossing, the bleeding should go away, and you’ll be well on your way to healthier teeth and gums.
Importance of Regular Exams

Because of our commitment to preventive dental care, we recommend a checkup every six months. Most dental problems start small, but then they go through a rapid growth phase. Regular checkups enable us to catch these problems before they become serious conditions:

- Plaque buildup
- Gingivitis
- Cavities
- Cracked or leaking fillings
- Bad bite

**Serious conditions begin as treatable problems**

Plaque, which is a sticky film of food and bacteria that forms constantly on your teeth, can harden in as little as 24 hours to become tartar. Even with proper brushing and flossing, most people aren’t able to remove all the plaque every day, resulting in tartar buildup.

Plaque and tartar buildup are the main cause of gingivitis, which is an inflammation that makes gums swell and bleed. Gingivitis is reversible, but if it’s not treated, it can lead to periodontal disease, which is an infection that causes receding gums, bone loss, and sometimes tooth loss.

The bacteria in plaque also cause tooth decay. A small cavity can easily be fixed, but if it grows into the softer inner dentin layer of the tooth, it can reach the pulp chamber very quickly, causing pain and further infection.

Failed fillings can also lead to more decay. Unless it’s treated early, decay will most likely lead to a need for root canal treatment and crowns.

Misaligned or missing teeth can contribute to problems with the jaw joint, such as pain and soreness, difficulty in opening and closing your mouth, and earaches.

**Regular checkups allow us to treat problems early**

To keep these dental problems from becoming serious, we recommend twice yearly checkups. Regular cleanings enable us to keep tartar from accumulating on your teeth. During your regular visits, we will also perform a thorough exam to check your gums, measure the bone levels around your teeth, look for cavities, check your restorations, and examine your bite.

Regular exams are the best way to eliminate the growth phase of dental problems, and minimize the time and money you spend in the dental chair.
What a **Dental X-ray** Can Really Tell **Your Dentist**

Dental X-rays are simply a type of picture taken of the teeth and mouth. An X-ray is a form of electromagnetic radiation, just like visible light but on a higher energy level. It can be used to penetrate the body to form an image of the interior structure, like bone or the inside of teeth.

Dental X-rays help your dentist diagnosis injury to the teeth, or tell if there is tooth decay. They can also show signs of gum disease, and reveal dental cavities before they are visible in a dental exam.

At **StarBrite Dental** we use digital X-ray technology which means the images are sent to a computer rather than the more traditional method where they are stored on film. This technology allows the amount of radiation transmitted during the X-ray procedure to be less than traditional methods.

Dental X-rays are usually done as part of your routine hygiene appointment and allows your dentist to catch dental issues before they start and even have a chance to get worse.
A dental hygienist is a highly trained and licensed oral health professional who provides you with educational, clinical, and therapeutic services to enhance your oral and overall health.

**Hygienists’ education and training**
Hygienists receive intensive, specialized education and training, which includes courses in chemistry, head and neck anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, microbiology, pathology, nutrition and pharmacology, as well as courses in advanced dental sciences and dental hygiene.

Prior to graduation, hygienists must complete hundreds of clock hours of supervised instruction in clinical practice.

**What hygienists do**
Hygienists serve several functions in the dental office. They check for and treat many dental conditions. They also clean your teeth, use specialized tools and techniques, and educate patients.

A hygienist will carefully examine your teeth, mouth, and gums, and pre-screen for any signs of decay, periodontal disease, or other problems.

As part of the preventive function of the hygienist’s job, she will thoroughly clean all surfaces of your teeth, removing plaque, tartar, and stains from above and below your gumline.

During your dental cleaning, your hygienist will use floss, special cleaning compounds, and instruments specifically designed to clean your teeth effectively and comfortably, like ultrasonic cleansers and rotary instruments. She may be involved with the specialized treatment of advanced periodontal disease, such as scaling and root planing. Your hygienist may apply fluoride gels or other treatments.

She also takes and develops dental x-rays so the dentist can view them and quickly diagnose any problems that may exist.

Your hygienist will teach you how to effectively care for your teeth at home to help prevent decay and periodontal disease, show you how to select the proper toothbrush and dental floss, and demonstrate the most effective techniques for brushing and flossing.

Your hygienist may also explain the relationship between a healthy diet and dental health, offering suggestions about which foods to select and which to avoid.
When you've lost bone due to periodontal disease, it takes new tools and techniques to clean the plaque off of your teeth.

In a healthy mouth, the space between the tooth and gums, called the sulcus, is normally two to three millimeters deep. And that’s how far below the gums you can effectively clean with a toothbrush and floss. With periodontal disease, the sulcus deepens. It’s now greater than three millimeters, and we call it a pocket.

Another problem in periodontal disease has to do with the shape of the tooth roots. If there is no periodontal disease, the bone level is high and the gums attach at the necks of the teeth.

You can wrap floss around this surface and do a thorough job of keeping plaque off of your teeth. But in periodontal disease, the attachment shifts and you lose bone. This exposes the root surfaces, which have indentations. Floss stretches across these indentations and can’t remove the plaque.

**Special cleaning tools**

Special tools are necessary to reach down beyond the normal three millimeters to thoroughly clean the indentations in the sides of the roots in a pocket. Each tool is useful in different areas of your mouth.

We’ll be happy to work with you to custom tailor a plaque-removal program using these special tools and techniques.
Keeping your teeth and gums beautiful, healthy and strong is more than just brushing, flossing and avoiding sweets. Good nutrition plays a large role in your dental health. It requires smart food choices and good timing.

**A balanced diet**
A balanced diet will help to boost your body’s immune system, so you’ll be less vulnerable to oral disease. It will also provide you with the nutrients your body needs to maintain strong teeth and healthy gums.

So what is a balanced diet? It includes plenty of fruits and vegetables, and moderate portions of protein, complex carbohydrates like whole grains and beans, low-fat dairy products, and unsaturated vegetable fats.

Also, eating foods like nuts, cheese, onions, and certain teas have been shown to actually slow down the growth of bacteria that causes tooth decay.

**Foods to limit**
Eating too many sweets, foods that stick to your teeth (like potato chips and dried fruit) and foods that are slow to dissolve in your mouth (like hard candies and granola bars) encourage tooth decay.

One of the main offenders when it comes to tooth decay is soda. Soda is one of the biggest sources of refined sugar in the American diet. In fact, a twelve-ounce can of soda contains about 12 teaspoons of sugar. Soda also contains phosphoric and citric acids, which can erode the protective enamel layer of your teeth.

**Frequency and timing**
Recent research has found that your dental health can also be affected by how often you eat. Every time you eat a sweet or starchy food, the bacteria in your mouth feast on it, and in turn, produce acids that attack your teeth for 20 minutes or more. And the more frequently you eat, the more your teeth are exposed to these acids, which can eventually dissolve your tooth enamel and cause decay.

One way your diet can benefit your dental health is to combine your foods into a meal. Sticky or starchy foods create less acid in your mouth when they are eaten as part of a meal because saliva production increases at mealtime. Saliva not only rinses away food particles, but it also neutralizes harmful acids and helps to remineralize your teeth, so they’re more resistant to acid attacks.

So to maximize your nutrition and your dental health, eat a well-balanced diet, limit sugary, starchy, and sticky foods and drinks, and avoid between-meal snacking.
When soft drinks are a part of your daily routine, they can destroy your teeth. Regular consumption can injure teeth in two ways: tooth decay and dental erosion.

**Tooth decay caused by soft drinks**

Tooth decay is caused by sugar. The average 12 ounce can of soda contains 9 to 12 tablespoons of sugar. This is important to know because the bacteria that naturally live in your mouth survive by eating the sugar they find on your teeth. As the bacteria digest the sugar, they produce acid. Your teeth are bathed in this acid for 20 minutes or more every time you drink a soda.

The acid slowly dissolves the protective enamel layer of your teeth until, eventually, there’s a hole in the surface. This hole can grow into a serious cavity.

**Tooth erosion caused by soft drinks**

Even diet soft drinks, which are sugar-free, can damage your teeth through dental erosion. Most soft drinks are acidic, containing both phosphoric acid and citric acid. These acids also dissolve the enamel layer, and this can cause the tooth surface to wear away and the biting edges to crumble.

When the enamel is worn away, it can no longer protect the sensitive inner dentin layer of the tooth. This opens the dentin layer to both decay and pain.

**Better choices**

To avoid the damage that soft drinks can cause, we recommend that you instead drink water, milk, or diluted fruit juice. These drinks are better for you, and they’ll help you keep your healthy smile.
Bruxism is the clenching or grinding of the teeth that often occurs while a person is sleeping. The symptoms of bruxism are:

- A sore, tired jaw
- Difficulty in opening and closing your mouth
- Sensitive teeth
- Earaches or pain in your jaw joint

**Bruxism can cause other dental problems**

The force on your teeth due to bruxism is many times greater than during normal chewing. These forces can cause:

- Flattened or worn-down teeth
- Teeth chipped at the gumline
- Loose teeth
- Damage to the bone around your teeth
- Damage to your jaw joint

**Treating Bruxism**

No matter what is causing your bruxism, it's important to treat it early on to prevent damage and restore harmony to your mouth.

Though all of the causes of bruxism are not known, stress is often a factor.

If this is the case, a variety of stress reduction techniques may be recommended. We may also recommend medication to temporarily reduce stress and relieve pain.

Sometimes, spaces between the teeth, worn teeth, or teeth that are out of alignment may cause bruxism. Crowns, bridges, or other dental restorations can restore your bite and eliminate grinding and clenching.

A common and effective treatment for stopping the damage caused by bruxism is the use of a nightguard. A nightguard is a plastic device that fits over your top or bottom teeth and protects them from the damage caused by grinding. A custom nightguard, made from models of your teeth, usually offers the best protection.
Electric toothbrushes have become more and more popular for a variety of reasons:
- They do a good job of removing plaque and stains.
- They can be easier to manage than a manual toothbrush.
- They are fun to use.
No matter why you’ve chosen an electric toothbrush, it’s important to use it correctly.

How to brush with an electric toothbrush
Make sure the brush head has soft bristles, and apply a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.

Put the toothbrush in your mouth, and close your lips slightly to prevent spattering. Hold your jaw in a relaxed, open position so you can easily reach all tooth surfaces.

Angle the brush against a tooth at about a 90-degree angle, then turn the toothbrush on, holding it gently against the tooth and gum for a few seconds. Don’t press hard—let the toothbrush do the work. Then move to the next tooth.

Brush all of your teeth in any regular pattern you like. However, since inside teeth often get less attention, you might try starting with the inside upper teeth, and then the inside lower teeth. Move to the chewing surface and outside of the lower teeth. Lastly, brush the chewing surface and outside of the upper teeth.

Your brushing routine should last about two minutes. If your electric toothbrush has a timer, use it to help ensure that your brushing is thorough and complete.

Make sure you brush twice a day, and don’t forget to floss.
Dental hygiene appointments are efficient and thorough. There’s a level of compassion where we take the time to not just educate, but to really inform our patients so that their proper oral health is being maintained, and as needed we work with them until it is there. Our patients can see that and it causes them to change their outlook on their oral health through education.

We take special pictures of the mouth and this allows us to show the patient exactly what is going on inside their mouth, and because they can see it clearly too – they get it. Again, we are a very visual practice, so on top of lots of pictures to explain dental issues, we use educational videos. We use them to explain what is causing their dental issues and what dental procedures can be done to remedy it. But more importantly, through the videos, we show the patient the exact at-home care steps they need to take care of their mouths.

We also talk about the importance of nutrition and how it relates to your oral health. Also, we talk about habits like grinding and clenching and how these effect overall oral health in terms of bone loss, chipping, fracturing of tooth structure, etc., again with videos on why this is and what’s happening to cause it.

We then offer a solution for that exact dental issue, such as night guards, retainers, or even sleep apnea devices in more severe cases. Each hygiene appointment is not a number, it is a very individual service where we take the time to inform our patients on how to best care for their oral and dental health.

At StarBrite Dental we not only care about what’s happening with our patients’ oral health but we communicate the information in such a way that the patient gets it, and then they are motivated to keep their teeth and gums healthy.

I have been a practicing hygienist for 25 years, I am very knowledgeable and passionate about this profession and I work to pass that enthusiasm and knowledge on to my patients.

Cherise Jackson, Lead Dental Hygienist
Dr. Seifi Named One of America’s Top Dentists 2014-2015

Dr. Maryam Seifi was named one of America’s Top Dentists again in 2015! The award is given by the Consumer’s Research Council of America, a Washington, D.C. based research organization.

“I’m actually a dentist in Northern Maryland. My smile has never been perfect and after 22 years of dentistry I knew I needed dental work of my own. It was Dr. Seifi’s reputation in the dental field, her expertise and skill that made me see her as a patient. I fully paid for my services and it was worth every penny. If you want the best, you go to the best.” - MJ
Refer a Friend or Family Member

Invite your friends and family members to join our award-winning StarBrite Dental Family and they will receive our new patient special:

Complimentary Exam, X-rays and Consultation PLUS $100 off first treatment plan!