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Inside

-
- An Unfortunately Fortunate Event pg. 1
- How to Be More Patient and Less Stressed pg. 2
- The Best Cleaning Tool Can Be Found in Your Kitchen pg. 2
- Green Goddess Smoothie pg. 3
- Why Everyone Is Singing Turmeric's Praises pg. 3
- How Vitamin D Improves Oral Surgery pg.4

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An Unfortunately Fortunate Event

This year, we were open a few days in between Christmas and the New Year. We had a patient come to our office a few days after Christmas to get his teeth cleaned with our hygienist Kasie. He came and went, and the appointment was uneventful. A few days later, we learned he had tested positive for COVID-19 and got infected during a Christmas gathering. Panic struck the office, and everyone started self-monitoring symptoms, and all staff who were in the office that day were tested for COVID-19. During a cleaning, a patient is unmasked and aerosol is released as we use certain tools to clean the mouth. Luckily, 100% of our staff tested negative, and no one developed any symptoms. It means that if a person who is contagious enters our office, our protocols are safe enough to not transmit it to anyone else. This was a wonderful testament to the safety precautions we are taking. It really helps having in each of our treatment rooms, two HEPA air purifiers — one at the feet and one at the patient's chin — and one negative ion generator to decrease the aerosol in the room. It also helps for staff to be wearing N95 masks and visors and wiping down the room with our medical-grade virus-killing disinfectant. Although we screen people for potential risk before they come in, we never know, and often the patient doesn't know, either, that they are at risk. Although this was the first case of a known COVID case in our office, we don't know if there were any before or after. This case helps us understand that we must keep doing what we are doing to keep our staff and patients safe. It's great that we are able to protect ourselves and not be a vector of transmission.

party, but it got canceled due to the COVID shutdown. Who knew that we wouldn't be able to celebrate it this year, either. In the last six years, we have made so many wonderful additions to our practice. We added two dentists, Dr. Julia and Dr. Levy. We added Kasie, a hygienist to work alongside Eizen, our seasoned hygienist. We replaced two dental chair units, two X-ray machines, all five overhead lights, and bought five new large TVs and arm mounts in the treatment rooms. We bought a 3D imaging machine (a CBCT), a CariVu (cavity finder using a high-powered light), and a Cerec machine, a 3D scanner and printer to make same-day crowns. The dentists have taken many courses, and the team has been trained to offer more services such as PRF, holistic extractions, biomimetic dentistry, airway-centered orthodontics (for children and adults), sleep dentistry and treatments for obstructive sleep apnea and sleep disordered breathing, metal reactivity testing, frenectomies, and other holistic procedures to ensure conservative, least-invasive, whole-body care. Our frequent staff meetings ensure we are on the same page about our protocols and procedures. And our Team Chat app helps all of us keep informed.

Advancements in technology have helped us grow within the holistic dentistry sphere and provide more services to our patients. We are also at the tail end of finishing our new website, which will have a chat feature, a way to schedule your appointment online, a way for you to you pay your bill online, a picture and bio of our staff members, and an updated description of all of our procedures. All of this couldn't be done without our amazing staff and wonderful patients. I have a rock star team: Chris, Kathy, Jen, Eizen, Kasie, Daniel, Amanda, Reina, Eric, Dr. Julia, and Dr. Levy. Together we've been able to turn our practice into the most comprehensive holistic dental center in Chicago. I am very proud of our doctors and their never-ending thirst for knowledge, classes, and learning from the greatest minds in dentistry. I also want to thank all of our wonderful patients, (especially all of those who travel up to several hours to come see us!) for supporting and trusting us with their precious health throughout these years. And, of course, I'd like to thank my support system: my husband, my parents, and my siblings. The older and wiser I get, the more I appreciate everyone around me for all the wonderful lessons they provide. Please let us know if there is anything else you'd like to see in the next six years at our office; we are always striving for constant and never-ending improvement.

The end of this month, March 25 to be exact, marks the sixth year we've been at this location since moving from Cornelia Street. Last year, we were supposed to have our fifth-year anniversary



-Dr. Bernice Teplitzky

HEAL FROM DENTAL SURGERY FASTER

WITH VITAMIN D

As we learn more about COVID-19, one of the greatest curiosities to come out of research is the role vitamin D plays in the severity and treatment of the virus. In fact, early studies found that many fatalities from the virus included patients who were vitamin D deficient. (WebMD reports that half the U.S. population, if not more, could have lower-than-normal vitamin D levels.) Recent studies even suggest that vitamin D could help our bodies fight COVID-19.

While this news is promising, it isn't all that surprising for health experts across all disciplines — including dentistry.

In dental surgery — such as removing teeth, placing implants, or gum treatments — healing quickly is vital to a patient's standard of living. Much like vitamin D may play a critical role in protecting us from and treating COVID-19, this essential vitamin helps dental patients heal faster!

Consider vitamin D a "super nutrient." It plays a critical role in skin health, the cardiovascular system, immunity, bone growth, and the absorption of other nutrients. Those functions lend benefits to dental patients. According to Dr. Scott Froum in Perio-Implant Advisory, vitamin D provides four main benefits to dental surgery recovery.

1. **It fights infection:** Vitamin D boosts your body's immune system, which "suppresses the destructive effects" of oral surgery. This can help your mouth heal quickly and with less pain.
2. **It improves bone health:** One of the biggest factors in the success of dental surgery is the health of the jaw bone. Vitamin D improves bone metabolism and strengthens the bone, improving the chance of success for grafting or implant surgeries.
3. **It prevents oral diseases:** Dr. Froum writes that vitamin D's antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties can prevent common oral diseases like gingivitis (gum swelling) and periodontal disease (gum infection).
4. **It aids in surgical effectiveness:** In order for dental implant surgeries to be a success, the bone has to successfully form around the implant. Studies have found a correlation between low vitamin D levels and failed implant surgeries.

While these benefits highlight the improvements found in dental surgeries, vitamin D has proven beneficial across all areas of our health. Prior to *any* surgical procedure, have your doctor check your vitamin D levels for optimal healing, and if you are deficient, consult with your team prior to dental surgery.

IMPROVE PATIENCE AND REDUCE STRESS

With These 4 Tips

In this fast-paced world, it can be easy to grow impatient. Things as small as waiting for a slow website to load or waiting in a long line for coffee can sometimes leave people feeling frustrated and anxious. Practicing patience helps reduce stress and helps you realize it's okay if something takes a few extra minutes. If you find yourself feeling impatient, here are a few helpful tips.

BREATHE DEEPLY

When you feel stressed, your breathing gets shallow, which amplifies anxiety. Practicing deep breathing can help reduce stress and frustration by relaxing your body and mind. This is as simple as taking a few quiet moments to inhale through the nose, drawing your breath into the belly and lungs. Count to four to help you focus as you inhale. Then exhale slowly through your mouth. After a few repetitions, you will find that your mind and body feel calmer.

SWITCH FOCUS

When agitated, it's common for our thoughts to center on the irritant. Though it may feel difficult to do when you're stressed out, switching your focus will help you calm down and be more patient. For instance, if you find yourself growing more and more frustrated by hitting red lights as you drive, try focusing on green instead.

Looking for passing cars, signs, trees, or anything that is green will help break that hyper-focus and shift it from negative to positive. Soon, those red lights will be less bothersome.

MEDITATE

A great way to increase your patience is by meditating, a combination of the first two tips — focus and breathing. Meditation helps people constructively manage thoughts by allowing them to practice observing their thoughts from a neutral perspective. Regular meditation can reduce stress and improve patience throughout the day. Even just 5-10 minutes of daily practice can have a tremendous impact over time.

PRACTICE ACCEPTANCE

While the above tips can help you improve your patience, sometimes you must simply accept that some things can't be rushed. There will be times when we cannot control the outcome: A red light will change to green when it changes and no sooner. Learning to accept that can help people let go of their frustration, become more understanding of their situation, and greatly improve their patience. Think of the situation as "meant to be," and look for reasons you were made to stop and think for a few seconds.

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1	8	6	5	6	2	7	4	9
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The Compound That Makes Turmeric So Good for You



Even if you don't know it, you've likely had turmeric. This popular yellow spice is what gives curry its distinct color, and Indian chefs and healers have long used it as both a potent spice and a medicinal compound.

Turmeric is undergoing a renaissance, and today, many Western scientists are better understanding just how powerful it can be. The main active ingredient in turmeric is curcumin, which gives this earthy-flavored spice its power — including the following benefits.

IMPROVE BRAIN HEALTH

Turmeric and curcumin can positively impact your brain in multiple ways — both physically and mentally. For starters, it can boost the level of hormones needed to produce new neural pathways and connections in your brain, potentially lowering your risk of Alzheimer's and other brain disorders. Curcumin has also been shown to slow the progression of — and in some cases reverse — Alzheimer's. For those fighting depression, it can also offer a boost. One study even found that it was better at treating depression than Prozac!

FIGHT INFLAMMATION

Consider inflammation one of your body's worst enemies. Turmeric can fight off invaders and diseases, increased inflammation often impacts your heart health, joints, brain condition, and everyday function. Curcumin can fight that. It can block inflammation-producing molecules at the source and has been proven to be as effective as anti-inflammatory medication (without the side effects).

PROTECT YOUR HEART

Increasing your intake of omega-3s and exercising are great ways to boost your heart health, but turmeric can be effective as well. In particular, the curcumin in turmeric has been shown to improve the lining of blood vessels, called the endothelium. This lining regulates blood pressure and clotting, which often plays a contributing role in heart disease. In one study, curcumin was found to decrease participants' risk of heart disease by 65%.

Turmeric is easy to add to any diet. Mix it into rice, sprinkle it on eggs, or blend it into soups or smoothies. Your heart, brain, joints and tastebuds will be happy you did.

Pro tip: For better potency of curcumin from turmeric, consider taking natural curcumin supplements. Consult with your doctor to find a supplement that works for you.

WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU LEMONS ...

Scrub the Appliances

Lemons don't just add a tart flavor to your favorite desserts or cool you down in a refreshing drink on a hot summer day. In addition to bold flavors, lemons also have powerful cleaning properties. Their acidity and oils cut through grease and can sanitize many of your household items.



The best place to clean with a lemon is in the kitchen. If you have a microwave, one good use for it is to, simply juice a whole lemon into a bowl of water, then plop the used peels into the bowl. Microwave the mixture for a few minutes, let the bowl cool before removing it, then wipe away the grease in your oven, stovetop or counters.

For odor-blocking properties, you can use a lemon as an air freshener. Leave half of a lemon in your refrigerator to trap and block potential smells and toss old lemon rinds down the garbage disposal. Run the disposal to clean the blades and freshen up the sink.

As for your kitchen tools, don't toss them out without trying this lemon trick first. Start by sprinkling salt on a wooden cutting board, then slice a lemon in half. Using half the lemon (flesh-side down) like a sponge, scrub the board really well. Wipe and remove the leftover lemon juice and rinse the board before using it again. Not

only will the board *appear* cleaner, but it also won't smell as bad, and the bacteria will be gone. You can also use this method to polish dining ware, spruce up copper, and even remove stuck-on food from plates.

Now, here's the real secret: Once you master kitchen cleaning a la lemon, you can use these same principles to clean other parts of your house. For example, salt and lemon can be used to scrub grimy sinks and faucets, while a few squeezes of lemon juice in a cup of water makes an excellent cleaning solution for mirrors and windows. You can even make your own reusable cleaning spray by fermenting lemon peels — and the peels of other citrus fruits — in white vinegar for two weeks. Remove the peels after two weeks and spritz the mixture over surfaces you need to clean!

Green Goddess Smoothie

Inspired by AmbitiousKitchen.com

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/4 cup unsweetened vanilla almond milk
- 1 organic apple, peeled and chopped
- 1 medium frozen banana
- 1 1/2 cups fresh organic spinach
- 1 tbsp chia seeds
- 1/2 medium avocado

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large, high-powered blender, add in all ingredients.
2. Blend on high for 1-2 minutes, or until all ingredients are well combined.
3. If necessary, add in more almond milk to thin the smoothie.
4. Serve immediately and enjoy!

