

Robert B. Gerber, DDS
Tower Dental Group
Tower Dental Implant Center

NEWS

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Tower Dental Group
Robert B. Gerber, DDS,
Director

Telephone
(310) 652-0450

FAX
(310) 652-0458

email
rbgdds@aol.com

Cedars-Sinai
Medical Towers
8631 West Third Street
Suite 730-East
Los Angeles,
California 90048-5911

Lila
Dental Hygienist

Narine
Dental Hygienist

Yelena
Dental Hygienist

Lisett
Treatment Coordinator

Karen
Administrative Assistant

Marjorie
Dental Assistant

Porcelain laminate veneers may be the answer...

...if your teeth are stained, chipped, or unevenly spaced

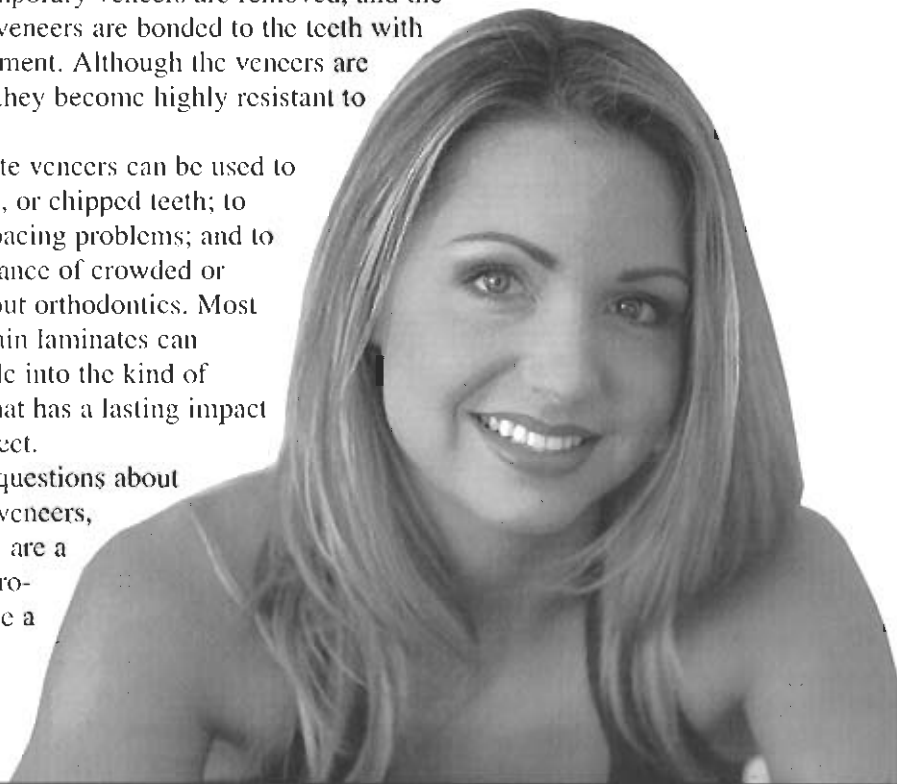
Nothing says more about you than your smile. It is said that your eyes are the "windows" to your soul and your smile is the "mirror" of your personality. Now you can make sure that mirror holds a beautiful reflection. It should be the kind of smile that people will remember.

The key to the transformation may be porcelain laminate veneers—an artistic, high-technology breakthrough that can dramatically improve the look of your natural teeth.

Porcelain laminate veneers are custom fabricated to achieve the desired color and shape selected for your teeth in just two visits. At the first visit, there is minimal tooth reduction of the selected teeth, impressions are made, and attractive temporary veneers are fabricated to prevent any interim cosmetic problems and to minimize posttreatment discomfort. At the second visit, the temporary veneers are removed, and the porcelain laminate veneers are bonded to the teeth with specialized resin cement. Although the veneers are thin, after bonding they become highly resistant to wear and staining.

Porcelain laminate veneers can be used to cover stained, worn, or chipped teeth; to correct color and spacing problems; and to improve the appearance of crowded or crooked teeth without orthodontics. Most importantly, porcelain laminates can transform your smile into the kind of memorable smile that has a lasting impact on everyone you meet.

If you have any questions about porcelain laminate veneers, or to find out if you are a candidate for this procedure, or to arrange a consultation, please call **Dr. Gerber** at **310-652-0450**.



Visit our Web site: www.rbgerberdds.com
Thank you for your referrals. We appreciate them!

Choosing paste

Choosing a toothpaste has become rather complicated. Because there are so many brands and types available, the task may seem a bit overwhelming. To make the decision a bit easier, keep two things in mind. First, you want a paste that contains fluoride and has been proven effective in clinical trials. Second, you want one that tastes good and doesn't cause any unwanted side effects. With those two things in mind, let's look at the options.

Baking-soda pastes—Although there's no proof that baking soda is any better for your teeth than any other mild abrasive, it does have an effervescence that makes the mouth feel clean. A baking-soda toothpaste containing fluoride will be as effective as any other fluoride toothpaste.

Desensitizing pastes—Ingredients found in these pastes can decrease tooth sensitivity by blocking the route from the outer surface of the tooth to the nerve. You may have to use the paste for quite some time before feeling the full effect, however.

Tartar-control pastes—The active ingredient in most of these pastes is tetrasodium pyrophosphate, which activates your saliva to keep tartar from forming on your teeth. It can help prevent tartar buildup on teeth, but it doesn't remove tartar that is already there, and it can't prevent buildup below the gumline, which causes periodontal disease. Unfortunately, some people have experienced tooth sensitivity or outbreaks of mouth ulcers in association with using the pastes.

Triclosan toothpastes—Triclosan fights microbes found in the mouth by attaching itself to the teeth. It has been found to be clinically effective in destroying bacteria that attack teeth.

Whitening pastes—Although these pastes can lighten stains on the surfaces of teeth, the whitening agents they contain would need to be used for several hours to be truly effective.

Every six months or so

What's the point in having regular visits with us—say every six months or so? Isn't once a year enough? There are a number of reasons to see us regularly. For many of you, it's every six months, but for others, we may want to see you more often.

We believe in individualized care that fits the specific needs of each patient. Just about everyone wants a bright, healthy smile, but there are other reasons to visit us besides having your teeth cleaned. We can detect decay long before you can. Why wait until you have a cavity that's causing a toothache when we can remedy it sooner with a smaller filling and help you avoid that discomfort?

Gum, or periodontal, disease is another problem regular checkups can detect early. Gum disease is something that can be battled most effectively when discovered before it has caused a lot of damage. Waiting too long can mean that teeth have already been loosened to the point that they can't be saved.

One of the effects of advanced gum disease is bad breath, but there are other dental problems that can cause this as well. We can help you find the cause of halitosis and do what's necessary to give you fresh breath that matches your lovely smile. We can't help you, however, if you don't see us regularly.

We also perform regular oral-cancer exams. These are important for everyone, but they are especially necessary if you use tobacco or drink alcohol regularly. Early detection of oral cancer could save your life.

Dentistry is a field that is constantly changing. There continue to be new technological advances that enable us to find dental problems more quickly and treat them more effectively. By seeing us regularly, you can take advantage of the benefits of new dental technology almost as soon as it's available.

Don't neglect your teeth. Come see us as often as we recommend to keep that smile healthy and bright.



It's almost impossible to avoid sugar completely, but some of us do a pretty good job. Sugarless gum is a case in point. Many people who chew sugarless gum regularly are dismayed to find "sugar alcohols" listed among the ingredients. These alcohols include xylitol, sorbitol, and isomalt.

Although these substances are similar to both sugar and alcohol, they don't necessarily have the same effects. They may raise blood sugar slightly, and they do contain a few calories, but they don't affect the bloodstream as quickly as sugar does. In fact, a few of these (xylitol, for instance) are found in vegetables and fruits.

As far as their effect on teeth, they are far less likely than sugar to promote decay. In fact, bacteria can't process them as easily, and xylitol may even interfere with the bacteria's ability to cause decay. However, a small percentage of the population still may suffer cavities after chewing sugarless gum. We'll discuss your individual situation with regard to this when we see you. So relax; sugarless gum may contain a little sugar alcohol, but it's not a danger to your teeth.

When gums recede...

As we age, our gums tend to recede. The saying "long in the tooth" originated from the fact that teeth appear longer as the gums pull away from them. The teeth are actually the same size they have always been, but more of the roots are exposed and they appear longer. However, receding gums don't just result in aesthetic changes; teeth will also be more sensitive to very hot or cold foods, causing discomfort. Foods will stick more easily around the gums and between teeth as well, so hygiene will become more difficult and increase in importance.

There are several things that can contribute to receding gums. Heredity and the alignment of the teeth may play a role. Problems with the muscles attached to the gingiva may also be a culprit. However, there are other contributing factors that can have an effect. For instance, periodontal disease and brushing too hard with a hard- or medium-hard-bristled toothbrush can both cause gums to recede even further.

Receding gums can be treated by a surgical procedure that repositions the gingiva. This will reinforce the gum tissue, with the goal of preventing more recession. Preparation for this procedure may include root planing and scaling and other surgical intervention. There are also medications and other preparations that can help to lessen the sensitivity in this area.

You can help to slow root exposure due to gum recession by practicing the kind of oral hygiene that prevents periodontal disease and by seeing us regularly for cleanings and checkups. Brushing gently, but thoroughly, with a soft brush, avoiding abrasive toothpastes, and flossing daily are all smart moves. Talk to us about other things that can be done to keep your gums from receding and your smile looking youthful and bright.



The aesthetics of a crown and bridge

The combination of a crown and bridge can be used to save teeth and hold them in place for a more pleasing appearance and retained function. The crown-and-bridge treatment offers a number of benefits to patients who are missing teeth or who are in danger of losing a tooth. For instance, we can retain your natural bite for comfortable eating and to reduce stress from opposing teeth. The teeth around the area will not shift as they might if the tooth were simply pulled. Although extra care will be needed, further decay in the area can usually be avoided. You will retain your natural smile and speaking function.

A crown, also called a cap, covers the visible portion of a tooth. Often, the tooth has undergone a root canal procedure. A crown can strengthen a tooth, but it is also used to support the remaining structure of a severely decayed or broken tooth.

Crowns can be color-matched to your other teeth, and they can be made to be compatible with the natural bite and function.

A bridge holds teeth in place when they have loosened

and/or replaces missing teeth in order to restore form and function. The teeth on either side of the bridge often need crowns so they can help provide the anchors. Materials used for crowns and bridges include metals fused to porcelain, which form a strong hold that appears natural.

Caring for a crown and bridge means practicing good oral hygiene—flossing daily, or using threaders to get under the bridge, and brushing after each meal. The health of the gums and surrounding teeth is especially important. Avoid chewing hard foods, such as hard pretzels, hard candies, and ice cubes. Sticky foods, such as caramel and gum, should be avoided, too.

In addition to the benefits mentioned above, a bridge helps to retain the natural shape of your mouth and cheeks so that you continue to look like yourself. Crowns and bridges work together beautifully to combine aesthetics and function, and restore an area that is weak or where a tooth has been lost so that you can continue to put your best smile forward.

Robert B. Gerber, DDS
Tower Dental Group
Tower Dental Implant Center
Cedars-Sinai Medical Towers
8631 West Third Street, Suite 730 East
Los Angeles, CA 90048-5911

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The "gold standard" for bleaching teeth

Tooth bleaching has become the most popular cosmetic dental procedure in the United States. There are many products and systems available for bleaching teeth, such as "whitening" strips, "paint-on" products, "whitening" gum, lasers, lights, and "whitening" toothpastes. However, the most predictable and cost-effective bleaching system remains the **Custom-made Tray System** for home use, administered with professional supervision.

Clinical experience has demonstrated that the Custom-made Tray System has produced the best results with the fewest complications. The system provides controls to help prevent complications. Under professional supervision, the proper bleaching gel concentration is determined, use of a gel with desensitizer is prescribed, and the correct time of exposure to the gel is recommended. The custom-made trays isolate the bleaching gel to the tooth-enamel surfaces and prevent excess bleaching-gel exposure to the gums and tooth surfaces,

which can lead to gingival irritation, damage to tooth enamel, and sensitivity.

Within one year of bleaching, the average patient experiences at least a 50 percent relapse of the color. However, with the Custom-made Trays, you can rebleach with a minimum of new expense. It has been shown by recent studies that "power bleaching" with various types of lights and lasers has no greater effect than bleaching without lights or lasers. "Power bleaching" offers convenience for some patients, requiring only 1 1/2 hours in the office, with significant whitening. The studies and clinical experience with "power bleaching" also have shown that the tooth color relapses about 50 percent within one year, and the entire 1 1/2-hour in-office process must be repeated to again attain significant whitening.

Dr. Gerber can customize the proper tooth-bleaching method for your needs and cosmetic goals. We do either method in our office. There is no substitute for professional supervision in your dental care. If you would like a consultation or have questions about tooth bleaching, please call **Dr. Gerber** at **310-652-0450**.

