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It's that time of year again! Knock on wood, we've had a nice, mild winter thus far. A patient told me he's been golfing at least once each month for the past 11 months. For all of our sakes I hope he makes it a couple more. On with the pseudo-dental newsletter.

During a string of cold, cloudy days I try think of ways to break the cycle and put a little personal sunshine in my life. I intentionally seek out laughter, good advice, inspiration and motivation. It recharges my batteries and gets me back on track for the challenges ahead. Not long ago, I went to hear Tom Osborne give a talk. The longer he has been gone from coaching the more I miss him! How lucky I was to grow up being influenced regularly by the things he said, by the way he coached and the way he carried himself. I've read his books and to hear him speak again was truly inspirational. He talked about how the legendary UCLA basketball coach, John Wooden, influenced his thinking. He adopted Wooden's philosophy that the journey was more important than the destination. He never talked about winning a game. He talked about reaching your potential each and every day and how winning would take care of itself. Nebraskans are familiar with the words inscribed on the old façade of Memorial Stadium: "Not the victory but the action, not the goal but the game; in the deed the glory." I had a good positive attitude adjustment that day. I try to carry things like that with me and I thought I'd pass it along to you.

Regular checkups are preventive maintenance comparable to putting oil in your car-its far less expensive than replacing a burned out engine. Lately we've had a few new patients that haven't been to the dentist in a while ask about how often they should visit for a checkup. The answer is this: usually every 6 months (patients with periodontal disease need visits about every 3 months depending on the case, usually forever) with x-rays once a year. Generally speaking that would be the rule, although there are numerous considerations that might require treatment or an x-ray at a different interval. I hope that answers any questions out there. Kudos to those of you who are regular with your cleanings, exams and x-rays.

By the way, we are lucky enough to have the services of 3 outstanding hygienists. Each has a different style and personality and all have come to us with outstanding credentials and many, many years of experience. If you have a preference for one or another we'll do our best to accommodate you, just mention it to us when scheduling!

Many of you have gone so far as to recommend us to your friends, neighbors, co-workers, bookies, clergy, etc. Thank you so much! We treat each patient as we'd like to be treated-seems like that is what everyone wants. Which leads to my next topic?

I'd like to relate a story to you about a long-time patient of Dr Dvorak's. This patient had been having some headaches. She explained this to a physician, who told her she could have a disorder of the jaw joint. This physician, probably well-meaning, referred her to a dentist he'd heard of that billed himself as something of a "jaw-joint specialist" (there is no such animal, by the way). This "specialist" diagnosed her with a disorder of the jaw joint. Our patient, who wasn't born yesterday, became suspicious when he proposed crowning every one of her teeth to "cure" her problem. Further, the "specialist" directed her to one of his cronies for a "second opinion". Fortunately, she checked in with our office before proceeding with any treatment. She saved herself about \$20,000 and a lot of discomfort. She also had her original problem resolved. I share this with you because many problems with the temporo-mandibular joint (TMJ or jaw joint) can be treated in a simple fashion at a general dentist's office. Particularly difficult cases we refer to an oral surgeon (usually Dr. Don Vap, who is Board Certified and has spent time at the Mayo Clinic). Unfortunately, there are quacks out there who prey on those with real (or supposed) TMJ problems. Well-meaning physicians, who in many ways have superior knowledge of the human body, usually are out of their realm of expertise when it comes to dental or TMJ problems. If you think you have a problem with your jaw it's usually better to start off here first. Now what do I mean by a problem? Firstly, it would be good to share with you what is not considered a problem: if you have a clicking or popping of your TMJ it is still considered normal, unless these sounds are accompanied by pain. No pain-no problem even if you hear a little noise or feel some clicking or even popping. This is normal and most people, myself included, hear or feel something on opening or closing the jaw. If there is pain we usually try some very simple and inexpensive solutions first. For those that have more severe problems, we refer those patients to an oral surgeon (who will use proper diagnostic tools and perform legitimate treatment). People with a significant problem can sometimes only open their mouth a tiny bit or feel a severe pain like broken glass in the joint. Most of us don't have that, which is good!

We continue to get positive feedback on the TV's. Each room also has headphones if you'd like to use them. This allows the staff to communicate while you can listen to the show on the tube instead of the wonderful sounds of a highspeed handpiece!

Please make sure we have your most current insurance information at your next visit. Among other things, it helps immensely when we file your claims for you. And although nothing beats directly contacting your PPO or insurance company, if we can help with any questions please let us know!

I'll finish up by saying that I hope that Punxatawny Phil doesn't see his shadow and that each and every one of you has a wonderful day today!

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Foix". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Chris Foix