

All Things in Moderation, Except...

Believe it or not, I still remember a lot about childhood. As for most of us, I sometimes experience certain smells or sounds that trigger a long lost memory. The smell of *Big League Chew* bubble gum always takes me back to my Little League days and trying to see if I could stuff a whole pouch of the sugary shreds into my mouth. On the other hand, that same smell probably triggers a memory for my mom of trying to cut a wad of chewing gum out of my little sister's hair. Either way, I still claim no recollection of how the gum and her hair came to be friends.

One thing I've learned is that I'm not good at lecturing people on how to take care of themselves or their teeth. It just never seems to come out of my mouth the way I'd like it to. To that effect, I've come up with a simple philosophy. Enjoy all things in moderation, except brushing, flossing, and prevention. Follow that advice and your dental visits will be far more pleasant.

As an aficionado of Southern style sweet tea, I'm the last to preach about sugary drinks. We all know that sugared juices, coffee, sodas, and other assorted drinks rot our teeth. Even sipping on milk or diet sodas all day can cause rampant cavities. For better teeth, limit the sugar and acidic drinks to meals and rinse with water or brush afterwards. If you sip all day, sip water.

I constantly remind my wife that I don't really like sweets. That being stated, it is amazing how quickly baked goods disappear from our household. I am constantly warning the exterminator to beware of this lurking beast. Although I think he'd be safe unless he wears chocolate covered gloves. Sweets in moderation are fine. A midnight slice of apple pie that sits in the grooves of your teeth is not. See above about rinsing and brushing.

So what positive action can you take to have healthy teeth? Brushing and flossing are a given. The more that you do those two things, the fewer problems you will have with cavities and gum disease. Also, get preventative care on a regular basis. As with everything in life, small problems, caught early are much easier to fix.

I hope that I've helped to prevent at least one cavity today. Until next time, keep smiling.

-Questions or comments can be sent to Drs. Parrish at ParrishDental@aol.com.