

Don't Let An Ailing Economy Hurt Your Teeth

Hi, Dr. Rementer here. Many of us have been affected by the economic news over the past two years. I know I have. Unfortunately, what used to be a 401K is now more like a 201K.

So I thought that maybe if I remind people of what they can do to keep their teeth healthy, it might just help. After all, dentistry is my passion and I went into it for many reasons. I enjoy the artistry that goes into building a new smile, but beyond that, I love the life-changing results that can take place when I take a smile that a patient was so ashamed of and make it into a drop-dead gorgeous smile. I know you have heard most of these tips before, but they really can help keep your teeth and gums healthy.

- Floss your teeth. Every time you go into your dentist, I'm sure your hygienist will ask you if you are flossing regularly. Seriously, flossing is vital to preventing disease. By flossing once a day, you can remove the plaque that forms between the teeth and below the gum line and it only takes a minute or two.
- Even when money is tight, visit your dentist regularly. When your dentist removes the plaque from your teeth, this reduces the number of bacteria, which is crucial in preventing tooth decay. Remember, it is a lot less expensive to have a comprehensive exam and cleaning than it is to get a filling, crown, or have a tooth replaced.
- Chew gum. According to a study published in the July 2006 issue of *The Journal of the American Dental Association*, chewing gum that contains xylitol, like Trident, for instance, can help curb bacteria that cause tooth decay.
- Eat crunchy foods. Foods that have to be chewed and are low in sugar help stimulate saliva. Saliva contains minerals that can help repair tooth enamel.
- When you have a problem that needs fixing, like missing teeth, bites issues or loose dentures, don't wait. Contact your dentist. These types of problems can affect chewing or tooth wear. There are new and affordable dental treatments, such as mini-implants, that can be used to help solve these problems.

Even though the economy continues to teeter-totter, don't underestimate the importance of your dental health. By taking care of your teeth now, you'll realize a savings in comfort, confidence, and your budget.