

Eleven Personal Stories

**“How Dentistry
Changed 11 Lives...
...Forever!”**

Dental Circle of Excellence

#1 “Never Another Lonely Night...”



“She has a GREAT personality!”

That’s what my friends always told the men that they thought would be “just perfect” for me, and that they endlessly tried to set me up with.

And, actually, that was very true. I had a great personality. But personality only gets someone so far. I started to realize this after an endless string of first dates. Most of the first dates would end with, “I’ll call you.” I got used to waiting for calls from uninterested men.

Sometimes the first dates would lead to second dates, but not very often. And not with men I was really interested in anyway. I would just go on the dates because I thought I wasn't trying hard enough.

My friends would reassure me. They would tell me that meeting the right person takes time. But I knew. I knew that there was something else wrong. Sure I had a great personality, but I knew I had to do something.

This something would have to be done soon if I ever wanted to meet someone that I would want to spend the rest of my life with, or if I at least wanted to develop a long-term relationship with a man. So, I took a long, hard look at myself.

Sure I had an awesome personality, but I knew there had to be something else I could do. That's when it struck me. The one thing I had never really thought about was my smile. That's when I took a big step. At least it was a big step for me.

I stood in front of the mirror and smiled. I never smile. Well, at least not a big smile that showed my teeth. I never wanted anyone to see my teeth. I had never thought about this before, but it was true! I always thought my smile was ugly. My teeth were spaced apart and were slightly crooked. I never did have the ugly metal braces that most of my friends had when we were teenagers. I was more focused on building that wonderful personality that I thought would carry me through life and give me everything I ever wanted.

Plus, after years of drinking coffee and wine, I now had teeth marked with stains. I was never disciplined enough to stick with the over-the-counter whitening strips I would buy and then use once or twice. Of course, even if I had been successful at whitening my teeth, they still were not going to be straight and even.

I started to become painfully aware of how many times people smiled at me and I didn't smile back. No wonder men had lost interest quickly.

I wanted to be able to be happy with my smile, but I didn't think there was really anything I could do about it. At least not something I could do quickly and especially without a lot of pain. I am NOT a big fan of pain.

Anyway, since my regular check-up with the dentist was coming up soon, I decided to talk to my dentist about my concerns.

My dentist had great news! He told me that I several different options to address the different problems I had with my teeth.

I opted to go with porcelain veneers because they would be a relatively painless way to straighten and take away the spaces from between my teeth. He called it, "instant orthodontics."

Another bonus - this type of veneer erased all of the stains on my teeth!

The procedure was really quick. My smile was gorgeous. I was very excited to show off my brand new smile to all of my friends, and ready for the next inevitable blind date they would set me up with.

Surprisingly, the thing was, I never had to experience another blind date! I actually met a man on my own. I was so happy with my new smile that I smiled everywhere I went. Like when I was grocery shopping, walking to work, and of all things during my daily run.

And, that is where I met my future husband. That's right! We had passed by each other during plenty of early morning runs. But, this time, I think my smile took his breath away.

We met each other on the trail – he going one way and I the other. Then, he turned around and quickly caught up with me. He breathlessly asked me why I suddenly was smiling during all of my runs. He had already noticed three days in row.

I gave him the smile of my dreams and the rest is history. We went out on our first date that night. After a year of running side-by-side along that trail, we were married last week. I will never have to spend another night alone!

Remember to smile at someone every day. And, be sure that it's a smile that makes you proud.

#2 “Twenty Years Younger Without Surgery...”



**Before, when I looked in the mirror, I was unhappy with what I saw.
Over the years, I had developed tiny wrinkles and lines around my mouth.
People told me it was a natural part of growing old.
I was also told I was gracefully growing old.**

I didn't want to look old. I didn't want to look like some old farm wife from the depression-era. I started to think about getting a facelift, but...

I wasn't so sure about a facelift. I was scared to have surgery that I really didn't need. I had researched facelifts. I learned that a facelift isn't necessarily permanent and I may need to have a second facelift before long. I wasn't sure if I wanted to go through it once, much less twice!

I also didn't want to become one of those women who get caught up in the whole Botox and collagen thing – searching for the perfect face.

At about this time, I moved across the city. As part of my moving routine, I found a new dentist. During my first visit to the dentist, the dentist's assistant was asking a lot of questions about my teeth and my appearance.

I told her that I was thinking about having a facelift done. When she found out that it was because of those awful wrinkles around my lips and cheeks, she told me that she was pretty sure that there were other options. She said that I should ask the dentist about the options.

So, I followed her advice. The dentist listened to what I said about my wrinkles and that I thought my face looked old. He responded kindly and said it was natural for our faces to lose the support they needed over the years.

He explained that as people age, our lower arch begins to collapse and our teeth begin to fall inward. However, he also told me that, in my case, my teeth had been wearing down a lot over the years. They were now too short to hold my face up.

It seems that my face was basically collapsing like those pictures of people you see when they don't wear their dentures and that was the cause of my wrinkles.

My dentist proceeded to tell me that there were cosmetic dentistry techniques he could use to create a more beautiful face and smile. It sounded wonderful! Not only would I have a younger looking face, but my teeth would also look younger!

He recommended a dental facelift. This process can be different for everybody, but is usually better than facing the risks a traditional facelift can cause like infection and bleeding.

My dentist ended up using restorative techniques to create longer teeth. Since I didn't have any missing teeth, I didn't need to have implants, but these are sometimes used in a dental facelift. He used a combination of porcelain crowns and veneers to create my longer teeth.

Before the procedure, my dentist had me wear a dental appliance to help create a better bite. The appliance repositioned my jaw, which helped create a healthier jaw relationship. With my younger-looking jaw, and longer teeth, I now look 20 years younger. Not only did my face look younger, my teeth were actually whiter because of the porcelain used in the treatments.

I now smile all the time and no longer worry about what my face looks like because I don't have attention-drawing lines and wrinkles. Best thing is I didn't have to go under the knife of a plastic surgeon!

#3 “Hockey Gave Me Drive and an UGLY Smile...”



Growing up, I loved playing hockey. I was also a rough player. I was so successful in high school, I advanced to the college level, earning a full-ride scholarship to the school of my choice.

School was important to me, but hockey was my true love. I scored a lot of goals, but I also checked and fought. Fighting is a part of hockey and one time, a punch knocked out my four front teeth. My only option at the time was to have fake teeth with a retainer kind of thing placed in the big hole that one fight created.

At the time I didn't mind. I was a big, tough hockey player!

But all good things come to an end. I graduated from college with a degree in business and hockey was pretty much over for me because I wasn't going to play for a professional team.

I was ready for the next chapter of my life as a financial planner. I was confident that I would outperform everyone at the company.

To my shock, this wasn't the case. I could never seem to book as much in new policies as everyone else. In fact, I was doing so poorly my boss called me in for a meeting. My falling self-esteem was about to get a bigger knock than I had already experienced with my low numbers.

My boss suggested that I do something about my teeth. I was puzzled. What was wrong with my teeth and what did they have to do with my sales? He explained that he had been in this business long enough to know that the weirdest things could affect your sales. He told me that, frankly, my teeth didn't look "normal" and people might be paying more attention to them than my presentation.

He said that I should speak with my dentist about my options.

So, I made an appointment. You see, I had played hockey long enough to know that you can't control everything in the game. However, the things you can change just might be the key to winning.

My dentist told me that if he replaced the four front teeth with implants, I would have a winning smile. A smile people would envy and I might sell more than ever before. I've always been a winner and I didn't want something like my teeth holding me back from begin successful, so I agreed to have implants put in to replace my ugly teeth.

Once the implants were complete and I looked in the mirror, I couldn't believe my eyes! I knew there was no way anyone would ever be able to resist a sale now! I no longer looked like I had been in too many fights on the street.

I learned a valuable lesson. Never underestimate the power of a smile. My new implants gave me a whiter, healthier looking smile along with more confidence to exceed all of my goals in life and at work.

My clients are no longer skeptical about my knowledge and are more willing to listen to my explanations of the benefits of insurance! My sales numbers are through the roof and I am well on my way to earning the salesperson of the year award at my company!

But my implants are really the true success story. I try to keep how I obtained my beautiful smile a secret, but I can't help telling people who ask how I was able to turn an ugly smile into a great selling tool. I've even sold some of my old hockey buddies on getting implants to improve their lives!

#4 “Mom, They Call Me Picket Fence...”



Being a teenager is hard.

High school only makes it harder.

My smile made it even more difficult for me. It made me a wallflower.

The other kids were mean and made fun of my less than perfect smile. I became used to my classmates calling me names like Picket Fence and asking me what kind of things I could fit between my teeth. See, I had tiny teeth. My teeth almost looked like baby teeth. I also had wide spaces between each tooth.

I didn't smile much and when I did, I either covered my mouth or tried to keep my lips together to hide my hideous smile. I dreamed about having a normal smile, but I thought it was hopeless.

My mom would ask me everyday how school was. I always told her it was “fine”. You know, the typical teenage answer. I didn't want to tell her about the problems I experienced every day.

One day I finally broke down crying and told her all the awful things the other kids said to me. I told her I had had enough and didn't even want to go back.

My self-esteem was really low. My mom tried to tell me everything was going to be okay and life is what you make of it. She told me to ignore what the others said and shoot for the stars.

My mom took me to an Orthodontist, but braces weren't the answer for me. My teeth weren't crooked or crowded – just too small. Pushing them together would have made things worse. I was resigned to the fact that I would never look normal.

One day my mom came home and told me that we were going to see what we could do about my smile. She said one of her friends had recently had veneers put on her teeth and she couldn't stop smiling or talking about what a huge difference her new smile had made in her life.

My mom told me she had made an appointment for me with her friend's dentist to see if veneers would be a good option for me.

I jumped for joy! She tried to keep me from getting too excited, but I could tell she was happy for me.

The dentist told me about veneers. He said the veneers would be made of a beautiful porcelain and simply “placed” on my teeth. He said the veneers would eliminate the spaces between my teeth and create a normal sized tooth. He told me another benefit would be a whiter, brighter smile made for the stage.

My mom agreed to let me have the procedure done and I couldn't have been happier! And now, she couldn't be happier either because I smile all of the time.

With my new smile came better self-esteem and more self-confidence. When auditions were announced for the spring play, I decided to try to get a part in the play. Not only did I get in, I am now rehearsing as the lead in the play. The lead!

I am so excited to be on stage in front of everyone I think I have found my new calling. Who knows, with my new “celebrity” smile, maybe one day I will have the lead role in a hit movie.

Veneers really turned my life around. Before I was hiding and not really succeeding at anything and now I have big dreams and the smile to help me reach the stars – just like my mom told me I should do.

#5 ‘I’ll Walk You Down the Aisle...’



My daughter has met someone special. She thinks he might be the one. I am extremely happy for her, but there is a problem. She is worried I won't be there for her when it is time for me to walk her down the aisle. I'm worried, too.

I've already lost my father and two brothers to heart disease and I'm afraid that I am well on my way to following in their footsteps. They were in their early 60's and I am now 58. So, when she told me about the man she met, and how she feels about him, I made a decision. Actually, I've made a few.

I decided to visit my regular doctor. During the appointment, I had several tests completed that officially diagnosed me with heart disease. He prescribed medication, exercise, and diet.

The exercise and diet part are probably the hardest part of my treatment program. I now have to get up and move instead of sitting on the couch watching countless hours of TV with a bag of potato chips. But I made a promise to myself and to my daughter.

I also decided to visit my dentist for a check-up. A friend of mine told me that there is a possible link between heart disease and periodontal disease, also known as gum disease and I wanted to cover all of my bases.

My dentist said he was glad that I was taking an active role because I did indeed have the beginnings of periodontal disease and he said I should be treated. I once again thought about my daughter and walking her down the aisle, holding her first child, and eventually, the day she turns 58.

So, I knew in addition to the exercise, good diet, and medication from my doctor, I was going to have to take more drastic steps and treat my periodontal disease with regular periodontal treatment sessions.

I decided to go with the non-surgical route to treat my gum disease. This involved treatment to remove plaque and calculus through scaling. I also started using a special toothpaste and mouthwash. And, of course, that old, reliable enemy of gum disease – flossing.

I am so happy with my decision. It was scary to go through some of the tests, but I know with my hard work and regular visits to the dentist I will be there to walk my daughter down the aisle.

I'm already starting to feel better. I've also met the man my daughter loves. And now I'm even more excited for her because she deserves the best and he's as close as I've met yet. I want to always be there for her and that's why I'm so happy I've decided to take charge of my health - including my oral health.

#6 “Experience PLUS a Great Smile Can’t Lose...”



Recently I learned that experience is not always the only way to get ahead in the fashion world. I've been fairly successful during the past ten years that I've been working in the fashion business. Until recently, that is.

A couple of months ago a newcomer joined the scene and has all but taken over. She has a great attitude, but she also has the looks and a great smile that wins over the hearts of all her prospects.

I was quickly losing ground on the fashion front and was at a loss. I didn't know what to do to get back into the game. I already had the clothes and the looks. You have to in order to succeed in this game.

The only part of me that I wasn't completely happy with was my smile. My teeth have always been slightly crooked, but I never thought I needed to go through the pain of braces to fix such a small problem. My teeth have also become darker in color over the years. Actually, truth be told, my teeth have started to look “old”.

I previously tried to whiten my teeth myself. I tried using store bought products, but I was mainly unsuccessful. They worked a little bit, but I soon realized I would need to keep using the strips, which I just don't have the time or the will to keep buying and applying.

I decided that the only way to beat my competition was to learn about ways to create the perfect smile. Even if it meant time-consuming whitening and braces, so I made an appointment with a local dentist that specialized in cosmetic dentistry. I wanted to learn about all of my options and he offered a free smile consultation.

During my visit, he listened to my concerns about my crooked and stained teeth. I also told him that my calendar was always booked solid and I would prefer something quick and relatively pain-free.

I was surprised and impressed to learn about the easy options he had for me to create a dream smile! He thought my teeth weren't crooked enough to require braces. Excellent news to my ears!

He told me I would be a good candidate for veneers. He thought porcelain veneers would be perfect for my case because not only would I obtain straighter teeth, but my teeth would also be whiter. All without using a deep bleaching system, trays, or strips. I would have the young, vibrant smile I wanted without wasting a lot of my time – now, or later.

My dentist explained to me that veneers required placing an ultra-thin piece of porcelain on each tooth. The veneer would help create the appearance of straighter teeth. The porcelain would also let the natural beauty of my teeth shine through. In other words, I

would instantly have whiter teeth. The best benefit was that it would only take, at most, a couple of visits!

So, I prepared myself for the transformation. He didn't even have to prepare my teeth for the bonding of the veneer. The procedure also didn't cause any pain.

I now have a brand new smile that is equivalent to the smiles many celebrities show off on TV and on magazine covers. I was completely blown away the first time I looked in the mirror.

And, guess what I found out? It seems that people in the cutthroat world of fashion want a fabric buyer with great looks AND the kind of experience I've put together over the years. When I added those two qualities together, I blew the competition away.

#7 “It’s a Happy, Healthy Boy...”



I was a smoker for years. Ever since college I've been smoking up to a pack a day.

I knew all along that it was bad for me and that it would be hard to quit.

I even tried a few times, but always quickly gave up.

I couldn't even quit when I found out that I had gum disease. My dentist showed me all the research that showed that smokers are more prone to gum disease and have a harder time healing from it, but the call of the pack was stronger. My gums and teeth were deteriorating from bacteria, but I couldn't bring myself to stop the nasty habit. Even with my teeth turning a disgusting color, and the threat that my teeth might eventually fall out couldn't bring me to quit.

But then I found out I was pregnant. It was one thing to cause harm to myself, but to put another life at risk? That was impossible for me to grasp. I vowed to quit smoking the moment I found out I was pregnant. It was much easier not to smoke when I thought about the health of my unborn baby. I quit cold turkey and figured that I was doing what I needed to protect my baby.

Then I read some very disturbing news. I found out that pregnant women with gum disease were more likely to give birth too early and have a baby with a lower birth weight than average babies. I thought quitting smoking had solved the risks to my unborn baby.

I also learned studies had shown gum disease can trigger increased levels of biological fluids that induce labor. Other studies also showed that women whose periodontal condition worsens during pregnancy have an even higher risk of having a premature baby.

Even though it hasn't exactly been shown that gum disease will always lead to an unfavorable birth experience, I was determined to do everything in my power to have a healthy baby.

I already had half the battle won. I had quit smoking, but now was the time to visit my dentist to treat my gum disease. I had to get aggressive.

My dentist started with a deep-cleaning procedure to remove the plaque and tartar from my teeth, which is a technique called scaling. He also had to go below the gum line to clean out the pockets surrounding my teeth that had formed because of my receding gums. He also removed damaged tissue.

He instructed me on how to take care of my teeth at home. Of course smoking was out. So, I started using antibacterial mouthwash and special toothpaste.

Everything I went through to curb my periodontal disease has been worth it. A month ago I had a healthy baby boy. He is amazing. I definitely will never start smoking again. I will also continue to follow my dentist's advice to keep my gums healthy.

I was lucky, I didn't require surgery for my gum disease and I have beautiful child. But I really call it luck because I knew I had gum disease before pregnancy. I wish I had taken care of the problem when I first found out, which is what I recommend to everybody. Visit your dentist on a regular basis and take care of all problems at first diagnosis. Also, never start smoking as it only leads to more problems such as gum disease.

#8 “It’s Back to Good Grades Again...”



As a mother, I always wanted to do the best for my child. I wanted him to have every opportunity in life to succeed. I let him try anything he wanted to, including sports, music, and anything else that interested him.

Never in my wildest dreams did I think that I could be making decisions that would hurt him in his performance at school.

I took him to the dentist every few years, but not on a regular basis. I, personally, avoided the dentist completely. I was a “dental phobic” – afraid of the dentist and everything associated with the dentist. So, of course, I rationalized my child’s need for dental care.

I really didn’t see much point in going to the dentist because I thought if we brushed our teeth twice a day with toothpaste containing fluoride, we were guaranteed to have healthy smiles. Plus, if I didn’t take him to the dentist, I didn’t have to go with him.

But I was wrong. Really wrong.

It wasn't until my son's report card came one semester that I became concerned that something was wrong. His grades weren't horrible, but they definitely didn't live up to what we were used to seeing on his report card. His teacher also called to tell us that she was concerned about his ability to pay attention in class.

So, I asked him what was wrong. Of course he said nothing was wrong, but I kept digging. I eventually found out that we were going through a lot of over-the-counter pain medication and I hadn't been taking any more than normal. I also found out that, contrary to school rules, he carried a bottle in his backpack. So, I approached him and asked why he needed to carry a bottle of medicine with him.

He told me his teeth had been bothering him a lot lately and the only way to help with the pain was to take medicine. The pain was causing him to not be able to concentrate very well in school. He also said the pain medication was causing him to not feel his best either. When I asked him why he hadn't told me about his pain he told me he didn't want to bother me about it and that he was afraid of what would happen to him if he did go to the dentist.

I told him I thought it was time to make a visit to the dentist to see what was causing his toothaches. Of course he didn't really want to go, but I told him it would be a good idea. We even found a dentist that had taken extra training in caring for people with fear and anxiety of the dentist. I sucked up my courage and off we went.

During his appointment, we learned that he had several cavities. The decay was causing him to have toothaches. He was going to have to have five fillings to correct the problems with his teeth. I couldn't believe someone could have so many cavities! I always thought we were doing a good job of taking care of our family's teeth. The dentist told me that, even with fluoride, some people still have problems with cavities.

My son's grades have now gone back up and he is even doing better than ever before! All because our family is now going to the dentist every six-months for check-ups.

Our dentist explained to us the benefits of regular check-ups and now I've seen the proof. Success is directly related to good health including good oral health. In addition to our regular visits, we follow our dentist's at-home instructions for optimal oral health. We brush, floss, and use mouthwash every single day.

Believe me, oral health is important to you and your child's success in life. My son will now have good oral health habits and hopefully he will teach them to his children someday. Visiting the dentist is a very important part of a healthy lifestyle.

#9 “And, Then, Out Popped My Denture...”



**It was one of the most embarrassing moments of my life.
Something that I always dreaded and hoped would never happen.**

My dentures had always given me problems. They would slip if I ate anything difficult to chew like an apple. So, I would avoid eating chewy or hard foods. Especially in front of people.

Ever since I had to get dentures, having conversations face-to-face always made me nervous. I was worried the person could hear the horrible clicking sounds my dentures sometimes made when I was talking.

Then the one thing I always worried about happened. It was one of my worst nightmares. I was out having a wonderful evening with my friends and their husbands. It was the perfect combination of friends, food, and conversation. I was having such a good time, I forgot about my dentures, ordered a steak, and laughed at everything.

My choice of entree and my dentures did not mesh. I was chewing and trying not to laugh at a joke one of my friends told when I felt my dentures slip and then pop right out of my mouth. The dentures landed with a loud clank on my plate.

I could feel my face turn the color of the cherry tomatoes in my salad. Even though the conversation hardly skipped a beat and my friends were all gracious enough to ignore what had happened, I could not. I wanted to disappear. Quickly.

My friend sitting next to me whispered in my ear, “Don't worry about it, it's not a big deal.”

Later, as we were leaving the restaurant, another member of the group came up to me and recommended I speak with my dentist about implants for my dentures. She mentioned it would be a more “secure” solution. I was still so embarrassed that I just smiled, nodded, and thanked her for the advice.

The next day though, I thought about what she had said. Maybe it wouldn't be such a bad idea to at least look into the option, so I called my dentist and made an appointment to find out more about implants.

My dentist told me how implants work to keep dentures in place. He said the implants would fuse to my jawbone and the dentures would then snap onto the implants. With this procedure I would never have to worry about my dentures popping out at dinner again!

I was so impressed with what the dentist had to say about implants, I immediately scheduled another appointment to start the treatment process.

Now I have implants to hold my dentures in place and life has never been better. It's wonderful. I can eat whatever I want without worrying what will happen to my dentures. I can laugh as loud as everyone else. I'm not afraid to join in the fun of a group outing anymore.

Implants have improved my quality of life tremendously. I am the happiest I have ever been in a long time and my self-esteem has improved 110 percent!

I think anyone who is faced with the prospect of getting dentures should seriously consider implants to secure the denture. Implants made a world of difference and you will never have the embarrassment of losing your dentures during an important moment.

Think about implants. I did and now I never have to think about my dentures ruining the moment ever again.

#10 “I’ve Stopped Wilting the House Plants...”



I suffered from bad breath for a long time. Years.

My wife didn't even want to kiss me anymore and I didn't know what to do about the problem. I felt like I was losing my life and wife to my bad breath.

My co-workers stood far away from me when we spoke. People actually preferred to call me instead of coming to my desk to talk.

I already brushed my teeth twice a day and used mouthwash all the time. I was so self-conscious about my breath that I made it a point to not get too close to anyone. I also carried an endless supply of breath mints and gum. I also had small bottles of mouthwash in my desk at work and in my car.

I was constantly battling bad breath. I had no idea how to solve the problem.

I thought if anyone would know how to solve this problem it would be my dentist. I decided to make an appointment. He told me that I had acute halitosis, a form of bad breath.

Even though i was brushing my teeth twice every day, I needed to do more. My dentist suggested several ways for me to cure my bad breath.

He wanted me to start with a clean slate, so I had a regular dental cleaning.

My dentist also taught me how to brush my teeth properly by using a soft, circular motion instead of brushing side-to-side. He also said it would help if I brush my teeth after every single meal, not just twice a day. He explained that food particles can become stuck in my teeth causing bad breath. He also told me it was important that I floss my teeth because bacteria can remain between my teeth even after a proper brushing.

Another recommendation my dentist offered was that I scrape my tongue every time I brush my teeth. He explained my tongue can harbor bad-smelling bacteria, which regular brushing doesn't necessary eliminate.

He also encouraged me to try a different sort of mouthwash. He told me to try mouthwash with a baking soda base instead of alcohol, which could dry out my mouth and be another cause of bad breath.

He also reminded me that he had been talking to me for years about my gum disease. And, I had to admit; I had never taken him seriously. All of these tips would also help my gum disease get a lot better.

I made a commitment to follow every one of his tips to combat my bad breath. And guess what! I started using each tip everyday and I no longer have bad breath.

It really hit me the other night when I told my wife good night and she grabbed me and said “Come here you sweet thing!”, and kissed me. In fact, she wanted me to kiss her again and again. Wow, I really missed kissing her and now it seems like we’re newly married again!

Bad breath had really put a damper on my social and work life. I'm no longer afraid to be too close to someone for fear of scaring them off with my bad breath. The best thing is that I have my life and my wife back. Things have never been better!

#11 “It Was Just a Little Spot In My Mouth...”



We hear about cancer everywhere.

It seems that everyone knows someone that has been affected by some form of cancer. Well, I found out that it’s a lot scarier when it’s not someone you hear about – it’s you.

It was time for my six-month checkup and cleaning. I expected a routine visit and I would go home and everything would be fine.

I was trying out a new dentist a friend of mine recommended. She said the office had a lot of new technology and my visit would be virtually pain-free.

And it was. Even the x-rays were more advanced. I was able to see the pictures of the x-rays on the TV in the exam room. At the end of the visit he recommended a more advanced screening technique for oral cancer.

I had never even realized a dentist was looking for signs of oral cancer during a regular check-up. I thought it was all about cavities and getting a really good cleaning.

He explained to me how it worked and that it wouldn't cause any discomfort. He showed me a pen-like device that was really a camera that would allow both of us to see the inside of my mouth in more detail using the same TV where I saw my x-rays.

This is when he found a tiny white patch on the inside of my right cheek. He showed me what he had found and explained that, to be sure about a diagnosis, he would need to perform a biopsy. The biopsy proved that the abnormal patch in my mouth was indeed oral cancer.

I was shocked, upset, and didn't know what I was going to do. I couldn't believe what my dentist was telling me. I had never smoked or used any kind of tobacco product. How could I have oral cancer?

My dentist told me I was lucky. He had found the cancer when it was hardly detectable and he assured me we would be able to effectively treat it.

He explained my treatment options. These included everything from surgery, chemotherapy, radiation, and advanced medications. Since the cancer was in the earliest stages, he recommended using surgery to eliminate the cancer.

That is what I decided to do. I opted for surgery that would remove the abnormal cancerous tissue from my cheek. It wasn't a pleasant procedure, but I am so happy I opted for the additional cancer screening. I am now happy, healthy, and cancer-free thanks to my dentist and keeping my regular six-month appointments.

I tell everyone I know that it is important to go to the dentist every six-months or if something is causing you pain in your mouth. Any irregularity could be a sign of something that needs to be corrected. You may never have cancer, but you'll always have peace of mind.

Take Action Now!

We offer a full range of dental services and **we absolutely never pressure our patients**. Ultimately our only job is to make sure you have all the information you need to make an informed decision.

So call today and start on the road to a more confident you!