

Is Your Smile a Full Body Smile?



By Dr. Walter R. Below, D.M.D

Dr. Below strives to stay ahead of the curve on new techniques and information to better serve his patients. He participates in over 100 hours of continuing education annually and has memberships in organizations like the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry focused on dentistry's future from a scientific and/or esthetic perspective.

Dr. Walter R. Below has practiced in Westlake for over 20 years, receiving his dental degree at the University of Louisville's School of Dentistry in 1981.

A full body smile starts with your teeth and ends with your toes. Having one means that every part of you is healthy and feeling great. It means that every part of you is contributing to your being seen as a positive or attractive person. Let's begin where it starts: your teeth.

This article is Part of the "Your Mouth is Your Mirror" series by Dr. Walter Below.

I will hear this from a patient, "Doctor, I brush, floss, rinse, scrape my tongue and do all you have taught me, but I still have problems." Taking great care of your teeth and gums is crucial to your overall health. Still, they are only a part of something larger. How does your overall health affect your teeth and gums? One answer may be found in the health and strength of your immune system.

A medical colleague once

shared this with me. "As health care providers, we do nothing to cure our patients; we just tip the scales in favor of the body healing itself." Even antibiotics don't cure you. They just reduce the numbers of bad bacteria so your own immune system can take over.

The immune system is the body's defense against infectious invaders. It also serves to proactively protect the body. As we age, our bodies are less able to absorb and utilize nutrients needed to support a healthy immune system. If our bodies' defenses are low or compromised, they will not be able to fight the effects of a hectic lifestyle let alone infections, chronic illnesses or even aging.

Gum (periodontal) disease becomes more common as we age. Why might this be since a 60 year old is probably more dentally savvy and probably a better brusher than a 20 year

old? The difference is likely in the body's ability to fight off the challenges of bacteria, toxins and stress.

Research at Loma Linda University showed that nutritional supplementation alone without dental therapy was able to reduce the depth of pocket measurements and reduce the number of bleeding points which indicate active infection. The key ingredients in the supplementation protocol used at Loma Linda included potent antioxidants, CoQ10, Echinacea and folic acid.

This suggests that if we are optimally healthy with a strong immune system we might prevent periodontal disease in the first place. If therapy is indicated, we will heal faster and with fewer complications.

With continuing attention to health through lifestyle



and nutrition, we may prevent the recurrence of disease and slow down aging. Two pretty good self serving goals. So where are we? Does having an attractive and healthy smile depend on a strong immune system? Yes! And so does being vital and alive to experience life's joys.

If we are what we ate, then we can be what we eat. Learn healthy eating, practice it as you can and supplement to compliment a commitment to your future health and happiness. Let's get your full body smile shining.

We provide an expertise for creating smiles that are confident, aesthetic and individualized.

Our years of experience in aesthetic bonding, orthodontics/braces, permanent and removable, bridges, tooth whitening, restorations, root canals and other general dentistry services allows us to give personal and individualized care.

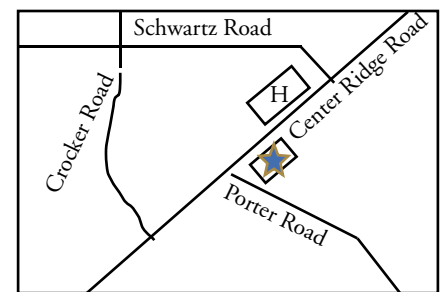


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