

Dentistry for Kids

Shari C. Kohn DDS, PA



A Word From The Tooth Fairy²

Produced to improve your dental health and awareness

Fall 2009



fromthedentist

Dear Patients, Families and Friends,

As many of you may have heard, *Dr. Lauren Ballinger*, will be leaving our practice as of September 30, 2009. While her reasons are personal, Dr. Ballinger and her family will be re-locating to her hometown in Western Massachusetts. Dr. Ballinger will be joining the pediatric dental practice shared by her father and uncle. We are saddened to see Dr. Ballinger leave but we understand that, sometimes, difficult decisions need to be made. We all wish her and her family well.

So what does this mean to our patients? Over the next several months, we will be transitioning all patients to my schedule. Initially, I intend to work more days and hours to personally treat your children. To the extent necessary, we may bring other dentists into our practice to help us. You will still have the pleasure of working with our exceptional hygienists and staff and your children will continue to see faces they know and love. We are all committed to continuing to provide you with the quality service and dedication to care upon which our practice was founded.

Most of your appointment times will remain the same. In some cases, we will be calling you to move certain appointments and we hope that you will be understanding as we work through any potential scheduling issues. We will, of course, keep you informed as we make these changes so there will be no unpleasant surprises.

Unfortunately, Dr. Ballinger's departure was on somewhat short notice and we are in the process of finding a permanent replacement dentist. As many of you can appreciate, we believe that our practice is a very special place and we need to find the "right person" to fill Dr. Ballinger's shoes. I am confident that with my local connections as a Past-President of the *Maryland Academy of Pediatric Dentistry*, my national connections in the *American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry* and my position on the faculty as a *Clinical Instructor at University of Maryland Dental School*, will give me the ability to find just the right person. After all, that is how we found Dr. B!

We truly want to continue to provide your children with quality dental care in a nurturing and pleasant environment. Please feel free to contact our office with any questions or concerns.

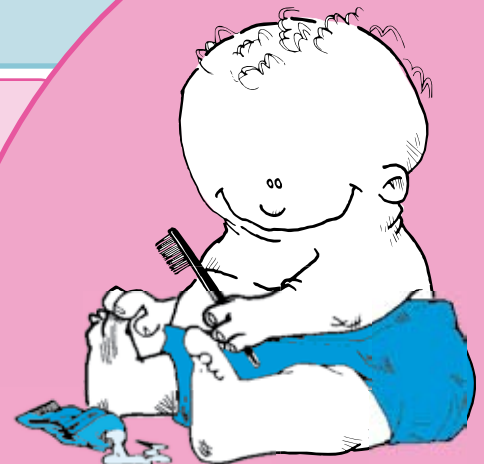
Thank you for understanding our situation and we appreciate your loyalty to our practice.

Fondly,

Dr. Shari Kohn

Shari C. Kohn, D.D.S., P.A.

Here at Dentistry for Kids we try to make your hectic life just a little bit easier. We hope having discounted products such as electric toothbrushes, brush heads, fluoride tablets, gels and rinses at our office allows you to check one more thing off your "to-do" list. Recently, we have found it very difficult to keep certain products in stock because they are on backorder. To ensure that you do not make an extra trip and leave empty handed, we encourage you to call our office first to be certain that we have the product in stock that your child needs to keep their smiles healthy!



Ask us about the great dental products we sell in the office

Mouth Sores

What to do?



Unfortunately, we see many children with painful “mouth sores”. Commonly these sores are called *apthous ulcers* or “*canker sores*” – they are simply a break in the mucous membranes in the mouth. Often parents can’t see these sores; they just know their child is in with pain or is experiencing an unexplained change in their eating habits. Mouth sores can have many different causes. The most common cause is *oral trauma*. This can be caused by physical trauma such as an injury, toothbrush abrasion, and braces or by foods that are hard such as sharp chips or those that are hot or spicy. Another cause can be *viral*. Sores or ulcers that appear often may be classified as “RAUs” or *Recurrent Apthous Ulcers*. These types of ulcers frequently have no definite known cause.

Some studies also show that chemical irritants such as sodium lauryl sulfate (SLS); an ingredient found in most toothpastes, can contribute to apthous ulcers – especially in those children that are predisposed to them. Another link to apthous ulcers is a diet high in acidic content. Kids who eat a lot of pizza, spaghetti, ketchup, oranges, or pineapple may be more prone to these types of ulcers. Stress, however, is rarely a cause for developing these types of ulcers.

What can you do as a parent if oral ulcers are a problem? Start by monitoring your child’s diet to see if certain foods trigger the ulcers. Secondly – read the label of your toothpaste. Almost all toothpastes have SLS! Some research shows that using a SLS free toothpaste may reduce the frequency of these ulcers. We have searched high and low to find toothpaste without SLS which does contain Fluoride and also has the ADA (*American Dental Association*) seal of approval. We typically only recommend ADA approved products as they have been through rigorous testing and have been proven effective. However, we have not yet been able to find such a product.

Due to the number of kids we see that have these painful oral ulcers, we currently are recommending, for ulcer prone kids, a toothpaste called *Tanner’s Tasty Paste*. We have found that kids love the taste of this brand and it is SLS free and contains fluoride. However, at the current time it does not have the ADA seal. We have been in contact with the manufacturer and we were told that because it is such a small company, it cannot afford to go through the ADA approval process - at least not at this time. The toothpaste can be ordered online at www.tannerstastypaste.com. We urge you, when ordering products online, to be very careful about ingredients, fluoride content, etc. We will be happy to help you select a product that works for your child.

If you think that your child may have an oral ulcer, when should you bring your child in to see us? If your child is in pain – we should always see them! We will want to rule out any other problem such as a dental abscess or infection. If you see a mouth sore, a rule of thumb is that if it doesn’t go away in 7 to 10 days – come in! Dehydration is a common problem we see when kids get these ulcers – especially during the hot summer months. Their mouth hurts so they avoid food and drink. Make sure your child is drinking plenty of fluids – water is always best. Over the years we have had to admit a few kids to the hospital for IV fluids – this is how debilitating these oral sores can be!

Some mouth sores require treatment or medication, while other mouth sores simply need to “run their course.” These sores, particularly if they are viral, can be contagious. They can be transmitted by sharing cups, eating utensils, pacifiers, or even kissing. If you or your child has an oral ulcer please be very aware of sharing food and kisses during that time. Remember to wash your hands frequently!

Please contact us with any questions regarding oral ulcers. We are here for you and your children.

Farewell

Sometimes it is impossible to fully explain difficult decisions and circumstances. It is with this general statement that I must tell the wonderful patients and their families at *Dentistry for Kids*, my colleagues and friends that I am moving from Maryland to Massachusetts. I leave with great sadness, as I am so fond of and emotionally attached to our "little" patients and their families, and the wonderful staff at *Dentistry for Kids*.

I was born and raised in Massachusetts, my father and uncle have a Pediatric Dental Practice there. I suppose this is where my interest in Pediatric Dentistry has its roots. After much consideration, I have decided to accept a position with them in their practice. My children will benefit from an extended family and my husband, a general dentist, will have new opportunities to grow and flourish in his profession. I am returning "home".

Having the opportunity to work with Dr. Shari Kohn at *Dentistry for Kids* has been an honor and a pleasure. Dr. Kohn was my teacher both when I was a dental student and while I was a Pediatric Dental Resident. Dr. Kohn and I have become as close as any colleagues could possibly be. She is my mentor and also my personal friend.

I cannot express to our patients and their families how difficult this decision was for me personally and professionally. I will miss each and every one of our exceptional patients. You have added such pleasure and joy to my life and I have cherished watching you "grow." I will never forget how special you made my life and my job just from seeing your smiling faces.

Sincerely,

Lauren K. Ballinger, DDS



Why Do My Child's New Adult Teeth Look Yellow, Dark Or "Dirty?"

At *Dentistry for Kids*, we are asked this question a lot! Many parents are concerned about tooth color when their child's permanent teeth begin to grow in or erupt. This is especially noticeable to parents when their child's top and bottom permanent incisors (front teeth) look more yellow, dark or "dirty" compared to their baby teeth.

Baby teeth are normally a very bright white color. Permanent teeth do, in fact, appear to be darker or more yellow in color. The contrast is even more pronounced when they are beginning to grow in right next to the very white baby teeth. The composition and thickness of the enamel (outer white layer of tooth) and dentin (inner yellow layer of tooth) of baby teeth and adult teeth are very different. As a result, baby and adult teeth reflect light differently which affects tooth color. Baby teeth look very milky white and

Remember - many people BLEACH OR WHITEN their permanent teeth and have a "Hollywood smile." For this reason, our perception of "white teeth" has actually been altered from the "natural" or normal shades of teeth.



uniform in color while adult teeth can look more translucent, darker or more yellow. This is considered normal. The darker or more yellow color cannot be "brushed away."

Once all of the permanent teeth erupt, the contrast in color is less noticeable. If there is still a concern over the natural color of your child's teeth, we can always discuss cosmetic options such as bleaching. Typically bleaching is not done until all the permanent teeth have erupted and after all orthodontic treatment is complete. There are many different kinds of dental bleaching and cosmetic techniques. We are here to help you find the correct one for your child.

Bleaching is not for everyone - some dental color problems or conditions cannot be corrected with bleaching. Prior to any treatment, including over the counter bleaching, your child should be examined and their dental and gum health should be evaluated. Remember - many people BLEACH OR WHITEN their permanent teeth and have a "Hollywood smile." For this reason, our perception of "white teeth" has actually been altered from the "natural" or normal shades of teeth.

If you or your children have any questions or concerns about their new permanent teeth, we are always glad to take a look and discuss them with you.

Dentistry for Kids

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Office Hours

Mon-Fri 8:00 am - 5:00 pm*

Saturday 8:00 am - 1:00 pm*

* by appointment

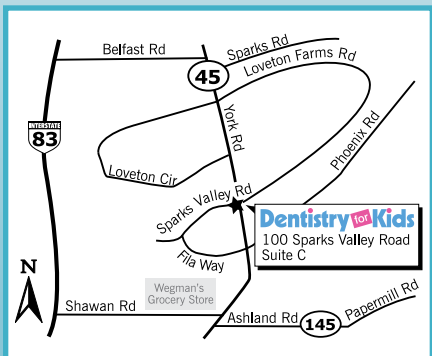
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