

## Denture Cream - (and the dangers of zinc poisoning)

Denture cream is used by more than 35 million Americans. Research continues to suggest that zinc commonly included in denture creams can lead to zinc toxicity which in turn can cause severe neurological damage.

In February 2011, the FDA sent a Notice and Recommendation Action letter to denture cream manufacturers requesting that they remove zinc from their products.



It is unknown what quantities of zinc might be safe. One more common theme was ill-fitting dentures requiring a larger amount of adhesive to seat the dentures properly, but the best bet is to use a denture adhesive that doesn't contain zinc.

The two largest manufacturers of denture cream are Poligrip, made by GlaxoSmithKline and Fixodent, made by Proctor & Gamble.

Poligrip removed zinc from their products a year ago in February of 2010 in response to mounting evidence linking zinc in denture adhesive to nerve damage. Fixodent has not removed zinc from their products, despite the FDA's recommended action.

This news topic highlights the importance of a well-fitting denture, and emphasizes the point that not all denture adhesives are the same.

The FDA now requires a label on all denture adhesives containing zinc to help educate consumers, but you can be a great resource to your patients in helping them choose a denture adhesive that does not contain zinc.

## Emphasizing the Importance of Child Dental Care

Many parents might not realize the crucial importance of proper dental hygiene for their children – and how it can have long-term effects in their adult life.

You can encourage parents to know that taking their child to the dentist is just as important for maintaining good oral health as brushing and flossing every day. The child's first visit to the dentist should take place by his or her first birthday, or by the time their first tooth appears. Not only will this help prevent any tooth decay, it will accustom their child to the dental office experience—making it easier to return.

**(Continued)**



Dental Health Services

## Emphasizing the Importance of Child Dental Care *(continued)*

Frequent visits to the dentist will help children and their parents establish a routine of healthy dental hygiene habits. Check-ups also help children's teeth remain strong and prevent problems down the road.

It is also important, especially as a child grows older, to monitor what they are eating. Parents and guardians should stay away from sugary foods, and substitute water for items like soda or other sugary beverages.

All of these habits will help to prevent further problems down the road – not only tooth decay but more serious issues such as heart disease.

Dental Health Services has educational materials called ToothTips available upon request, for you to offer to members.



## Online Reputation - Revisited

A few issues ago, there was a *DocTalk* article about online reputation and what that means for you and your office.

Your online reputation has potential to be a big boost to your business, and yet at the same time, it can be the single worst thing to happen to your business if there are negative reviews online that aren't addressed.

If you haven't already, try to find your business on common websites like Yelp.com, AngiesList.com and Google or just search for your office's or doctor's name

and you will likely find information on your office. If you don't find anything, it's a great opportunity to claim your profile and your online reputation. You can encourage patients to review your office.

**Do you actively monitor your online reputation? What have you found?**

**Send your tips to Peter at [polson@dentalhealthservices.com](mailto:polson@dentalhealthservices.com), and we'll share them in an upcoming issue of *DocTalk*.**

## Language Assistance Program

Dental Health Services provides language assistance to our members and dentists who treat our members who are Limited English Proficient.

During regular business hours, Mon-Fri 8am-5pm, you will be able to speak directly to us by calling 866-756-4259. After hours, you can still connect by following a few directions on the phone line.

If a member declines language assistance translation services, you should note this in the member's chart.

We're always happy to hear any comments or suggestions from you. You can reach us by calling your Professional Service Hotline at 800-223-4347 and we will be eager to help you.



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