

What Is Holistic Dentistry?

by Jonathan J. Bromboz, D.D.S., P.A.

When taking a "holistic approach," a doctor looks at how one area of infection can affect the rest of the body. A holistic dentist broadens that approach, viewing the mouth and head as connected to the rest of the body. Most dentists tend to focus in a small area of the mouth, where the teeth and gums are, overlooking the fact that what they do in the mouth affects the rest of the body. A holistic dentist realizes that materials used in the mouth have an effect on a person's over all health and well-being. He or she recognizes that some materials are potentially toxic and that some procedures are potentially harmful.

Characteristic of a holistic dentist:

- ✓ Rather than placing or using silver mercury amalgam fillings, the holistic dentist prefers not to use metal in the mouth and uses metal only as a last resort.
- ✓ Uses more suitable biocompatible (compatible with life/the body) materials such as porcelains and composites.
- ✓ When removing silver amalgam fillings, the holistic dentist uses a sheet of rubber (called the "rubber dam") over the teeth. This prevents silver mercury amalgam dust particles from going down the patient's throat when the fillings are being removed.

- ✓ Uses gauze packing and activated charcoal underneath the rubber dam, next to the tongue and cheek, to capture any particles that make it past the rubber dam.
- ✓ Uses a strong suction to pull out the debris and dust while drilling, and uses a water spray to keep the dust down.
- ✓ Uses eye protection and drapes over the face head and neck of the patient to prevent over spray from getting on the skin.
- ✓ Is conservative in any treatment, doing the minimum amount of dentistry necessary.
- ✓ Educates patients on how teeth that have root canals can still harbor bacteria and can still cause problems in other areas of the body. Discusses alternatives to root canals.
- ✓ Can test for the biocompatibility of dental materials, and whether they are or are not suitable for the patient.
- ✓ Prefers to use natural alternative remedies, herbs and supplements to handle conditions, if possible.
- ✓ Helps patients get control of and eliminate infections present in the gums, thus enhancing a person's longevity.
- ✓ Makes sure patients understand that bacteria growing under the gums and between the gums and teeth can infect the gums, get into the bloodstream, and spread infection to other areas of the body, leading to serious health conditions.

- ✓ Listens to patients' needs and wants; helps them choose the correct treatment for their over-all well being; helps them make decisions that enhance health.
- ✓ Holds membership in organizations that support a more natural, alternative, non-toxic approach to dental treatment (e.g.: The International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology, The Holistic Dental Association, Mercury Free Dentistry, the Academy of Biological Dentistry).
- ✓ Understands how jaw position and bite can affect the head, neck and the rest of the spinal column and can cause headaches, neck aches, backaches and other pains.

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