INSURANCE CORNER
The MAXIMUM BENEFIT is the most money an insurance company will pay in any contract year. Patients are usually very disturbed if they go over their max and have to pay more than they expected. There are 2 main ways this can happen even though we make every effort to avoid it. If you have treatment done in other dental offices, it is impossible for us to determine how much of your max you have used. Also if the treatment is more complicated than originally diagnosed and additional work is necessary, the maximum can be exceeded. You can go over the max even if everyone is trying hard to avoid it. Your insurance company is not interested in how much treatment you need only in limiting their cost.

PAYMENT POLICY
Our policy is for payment at the time of service. If you have dental insurance, we will bill the insurance company for their portion, but patient co-payments are due at the time of treatment.

PRE-MED POLICY
Some people must take antibiotics before certain dental procedures. The most common service which requires this antibiotic coverage is the prophylaxis (dental cleaning). People with various heart conditions, bone prostheses and transplants may need this preventive measure.

In the past we might have dispensed the antibiotic here if the patient forgot to pick up the prescription. Based on consultation with pharmacologists, we will no longer dispense antibiotics from the office. If you forget to take your medication, we will have to reschedule your appointment.

LOOSE BRIDGE
On occasion a cemented bridge will become loose on one of the abutment teeth. When this happens it is possible that the tooth under the crown could decay badly, perhaps even resulting in the loss of the tooth. So if you have a cemented bridge that feels loose, squishy or just different, please don't delay. Call for an appointment to have it checked.

FLOSS OR DIE
New research has shown that people with periodontal disease have significant risk for various serious medical problems. These problems include heart attacks, atherosclerosis, infective endocarditis, stroke, osteoporosis, transplant failure and low birth weight babies. The common factor seems to be bacteria and viruses getting into the blood from bleeding and infected gums. So to reduce the risk of developing one of these serious conditions FLOSS DAILY.

RECURRENT MOUTH ULCERS
Some people suffer from frequent mouth ulcers. The scientific name is Recurrent Aphthous Ulcer (RAU). These ulcers can be very painful. Acidic foods, gluten sensitivity and trauma are often suggested as possible causes. Now

Spring/Summer 1998
1500 West Saginaw Street • Lansing, Michigan 48915
517-485-5627
ELECTRIC BRUSHES

Based on recent advancement we now can recommend two electric brushes: the Oral-B (Braun) and the Sonicare. These brushes use different bristle movements to remove plaque from your teeth. The Oral-B (Braun) brush is circular and quite small. The brush head has reciprocal action and you clean one tooth at a time. The Sonicare brush uses an electro-mechanical action which produces a sonic motion of the bristle head, cleaning beyond the brush tip. Both brushes come with timers which help assure you will spend enough time cleaning your teeth. Research has shown these brushes to be more effective than manual brushing.

THE WORLD’S 5 BIGGEST DENTAL MYTHS

1 MYTH: The harder you brush, the cleaner your teeth.

FACT: It’s important to use a very light touch when you brush. Pushing your toothbrush hard against your teeth and gums does not increase cleaning effectiveness.

2 MYTH: The stiffer your toothbrush, the better.

FACT: Studies show that soft bristles are the most effective. Always buy “soft” bristles; replace every few months. One way to keep soft bristles soft is to run hot water over them before you brush.

3 MYTH: You should keep your toothbrush away from your gums.

FACT: If you use a gentle touch and if you use a soft-bristled brush, it’s actually good to massage your gums as you brush. It’s the rough treatment that contributes to premature gum recession.

4 MYTH: It’s normal for gums to bleed a little when you brush or floss.

FACT: Bleeding gums are a sign of periodontal disease. If you have a mild case, a week or so of careful brushing and daily flossing should curb the inflammation and stop the bleeding.

5 MYTH: Dental X-rays are risky.

FACT: The typical set of dental X-rays gives you about the same amount of radiation as a single airplane flight. And this is without the lead apron.

ADDED X-RAY BENEFIT

Dental x-rays can detect potential strokes by finding calcium buildup in the external carotid artery. These calcium deposits could block blood to the brain, a major cause of strokes. This same x-ray will some day be used to determine bone density with the hope of heading off problems with osteoporosis. These findings do not constitute a medical diagnosis, but a sign that a referral to the appropriate medical doctor is needed.

THANKS, BUT NO CIGAR

Ten million Americans smoke cigars—which is an increase of about two million since 1993.

• Secondhand cigar smoke is more poisonous than secondhand cigarette smoke.

• Cigar smoking can lead to cancer of the voice box (larynx), mouth, esophagus, and lungs.

• 99% of cigar smokers have “atypical cells” in their voice boxes.

• Cigar smokers are three to five times more likely to die of lung cancer than non-smokers.

• Cigar smokers are five times more likely to get emphysema than nonsmokers.

• Nicotine does not have to be inhaled to damage the heart and blood vessels.

Source: American Lung Association