



AF Digest

Augusta Family Dentistry's Newsletter to Help Improve Your Dental Health & Awareness

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Comparing tornados and teeth

By Dr. Rob Colt

Welcome spring! Oh, yeah, welcome tornado season too. If a tornado levels a house what do we do? Do we leave it and move? NO! Do we rebuild? YES! We must. In doing so, we start with the foundation of the home. If the foundation is sound we may clean up the broken parts and start to rebuild the top floor on the stability of the existing foundation. In some cases the foundation needs some repair to be able to rebuild the top floor. Once that is done, you can proceed with putting things back together and get things back to resembling the original building.

The good news is that tornado season doesn't last all year. Rebuilding a house that has been devastated is a lot like rebuilding a tooth that has been broken or destroyed by decay or damaging forces in the mouth. The bad news in the mouth is that tornado season is year-round. Unchecked forces in the bite and uncontrolled decay can have tornado-like effects on the teeth! Total decimation.

Rebuilding the house and teeth are the same. We clean up the damage on the top and look to assess the foundation before rebuilding. I have had a few experiences recently that I want to share.

Case one: A patient had broken a tooth by excessive biting forces. This was quite some time in coming as the tooth was under these forces day-in and

day-out for years. He broke the tooth eating a piece of cake. I'm not talking brick-hard aged fruitcake, it was soft birthday cake. I don't think that the cake was the thing that did it in, though it was the straw that broke the camel's back. This was a case that was fixed in one hour with a crown placed over the broken portion of the tooth. In the tornado analogy it is like the building that has the roof taken off but the rest of the house is doing well. It just needed a new roof put on top of the first-story walls and that was what took it back to its original condition. Now the biting forces in his mouth are protected with a nightguard so that the new crown doesn't break again like the original tooth did. This is why it is always important to ask the question why did it break and solve that issue or we could be back in this same scenario again soon.

Case two: This patient had allowed a sore tooth to go on too long. It had decayed into the nerve. It was painful but it was solved quickly. This was successfully treated with a root canal treatment with a post and a crown. In our analogy of the house it was like cleaning out the basement re-building the first floor and topping it all off with a new roof. This is more work but with a good foundation (the root of the tooth) it is easy to re-build.

Case three: This last case is one that deals with a

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Dr. Mitsch lectures at AACP; heads development team

On Saturday, April 30, 2011, Dr. Paul Mitsch lectured at the American Academy of Craniofacial Pain Institute. His lecture was on the Integration of Current Concepts in Craniofacial Pain.

Another exciting project for Dr. Mitsch involves new technology that he and the late Dr. Steven Rose created with BioResearch, Inc. The equipment called M-Scan is a two-channel EMG that allows clinicians to immediately view the effectiveness of splint therapy. Dr. Mitsch is now leading the development team for BioResearch, Inc. and the product will be available in dental practices in Fall 2011. More details to come!

ontheflipside
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broken foundation. This patient had a root canal inside a tooth that was done years ago and was failing with infection around the bone of the root. What do you do when the foundation is compromised? Well, the form of the tooth makes a big difference. This particular tooth was a molar and had two roots. One root had failed and she thought that she'd lose the tooth altogether. The front root was removed and the back root was used like a part of a bridge to the tooth in the front. This allowed us to build a bridge and save the function of the teeth even though some of the foundation was broken.

Dentistry is really great in the things that can be done. Talk to us about your teeth and what concerns you have. If years of wear and damage have demolished your teeth, we can help.

**SUMMER IS THE BEST TIME TO HAVE WISDOM TEETH REMOVED!
Call AFD today if your teen still has his or her third molars.**