

Episode 126 Transcript

00:00:00:00 - 00:00:15:12

Dr. Staci Whitman

Anything you put in the mouth is shifting your microbiome, whether it's a filling, a veneer, a crown, a grill, whatever you're doing. Think about the long term impacts of that, because it's never going to be as good as your natural tooth structure.

00:00:15:15 - 00:00:40:26

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Welcome to the DUTCH podcast, where we dive deep into the science of hormones, wellness and personalized health care. I'm Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton, chief medical officer at DUTCH. Join us every Tuesday as we bring you expert insights, cutting edge research, and practical tips to help you take control of your health from the inside out. Whether you're a health care professional or simply looking to optimize your own well-being, we've got you covered.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

The contents of this podcast are for educational and informational purposes only. This information is not to be interpreted or mistaken for medical advice. Consult your health care provider for medical advice, diagnosis and treatment. Hi there! Welcome to this episode of the DUTCH Podcast. I'm so glad that you're here with me today and listening in to the topic this week, which you might think dental health.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Why is that something that we're talking about on the DUTCH podcast? But if you follow the literature, what we're really seeing is that hormone health and oral health are really tightly related by directionally, and that oral health and the oral microbiome are playing a critical role in our overall health as a population. Today's guest is a functional dentist, and she's really breaking ground and helping us understand this.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

She's going to practice in Portland, Oregon, working with pediatric population, but consults on adult health all the time as well. You're going to walk away with so many new connections today. And not just that, some really topical tips to help you really make the change, to improve your oral health and really avoid the things that are

detrimental to it.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

You know, Doctor Staci is really passionate because she really sees that oral health and correcting oral health is not just a window to the inside world, but a path towards actually improving our health overall. My guest today is Doctor Staci Whitman. Like I said, she's a pediatric dentist in Portland, Oregon, and she's the founder of No Po Kids Dentistry, where she practices with a holistic focus.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

She earned her dental degree from Tufts University. We love Boston and completed her pediatric dentistry certificate at OHSU. And then she became a diplomat of the American Board of Pediatric Dentistry in 2012. Her clinical and research interests focus on children's airway health and sleep, which we'll talk about as well children and adults, and efforts to improve pediatric airway diagnostics.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Now going beyond dentistry. She's active in integrative health circles. I'm sure you guys have seen her online. She's prolific. She also sort of holds certification as a health and wellness coach and engages with organizations in holistic dentistry and functional medicine. Really excited and honored to have our guest today, Doctor Staci Whitman.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

Hi, Jaclyn. Thanks for having me.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

So I'm so excited to have this conversation. And I want to just start because a lot of listeners are probably like dentistry, like, why would you have dentistry on a hormone podcast? And you know, as we think about like rolling into October and breast cancer awareness and like looking at the way we look at complex diseases, including hormone dysfunction, we're starting to kind of piece together that there's a lot of confounding elements.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And oral health is something that I've become more interested in because I would do fertility care. And I'd love if we can talk more about that, like preconception and fertility care and what things like periodontitis or other, you know, oral health indicators say about fertility. But the truth is there's like really interesting research on the connection between oral health and systemic health.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

So I want to start there, too. Just maybe you can help orient our listeners to like, why you care so much about this topic and why they should care in relationship to their hormone health and their overall health.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

Absolutely. Well, thank you for giving me an opportunity to elevate this education. You know, I, I began my journey as a very traditional dentist, as many of us do in our practices, and I just found a lot of dissatisfaction in my career because I felt like I was just constantly putting out fires and dealing with end stage disease, but I wasn't really addressing the root cause of the issues or putting all the connectors together.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

And, you know, we've unfortunately compartmentalized the human body so much with all these specialties and subspecialties. And this is where I started to become very passionate about the oral microbiome. And so we learned a little bit in dental school about certain microbes, specifically on strep mutations, which is linked in and causal of, cavities and gingivitis, which is involved in gum disease.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

But that's about it. It's not really digging deep into what these, these bacteria in these pathogens can do to downstream issues in the body, such as fertility and hormone imbalances, etc., which we'll get into. But this is why I'm passionate about it, because I believe we're missing the elephant in the room, if you will, and it all comes back to the microbiome.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

And we've studied so much about the gut microbiome and its impacts and systems in the body, including hormone balance and oral health. But now we need to, in my opinion, focus on the oral microbiome. And I also think our physician colleagues need to be aware of this too, because you could be working a patient up and trying to get them on a road of recovery.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

But if you're ignoring the mouth and you're ignoring what's happening there, and your patient potentially has oral dysbiosis or leaky gums like leaky gut, you know, they have gingival inflammation, periodontal disease, etc., you could be missing a big opportunity to get your patients healthy again. And so a lot of this does tie back to the state of the microbes in the microbial balance in the mouth.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Yeah I mean I'll never forget the first time I heard about it. And it was probably like the early 2000. So nearly 20 years ago, it was a patient of mine who was a dental hygienist, and she was someone trying to convert her dentist to be kind of looking at this a little bit more holistically. And at the time, it seemed like the major model for a study was cardiovascular disease was not the first kind of connection that was made.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

Yeah, it's definitely the bacteremia that can be associated, especially, not only impacting cardiovascular health but post-surgery too. And so many dentists are taught about this. Are antibiotic protocol.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Problematic? Yeah.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

Exactly.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Yeah I remember.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

Yeah. And then also after joint replacements or knee replacements and that's essentially all that you, you are exposed to really in dental school is, is the antibiotic protocol necessary to protect these patients before they have dental treatment. And but I will give a nod to the hygienists, because I do think the hygienist get it. They're in there.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

They're seeing the tissues and they're starting to put these connectors together about why is this patient healthy? And this one isn't, even though they maybe have the same diet, lifestyle and habits. What is different? And this is where we need to dig deeper into the bacterial, connections and the what's and also what's happening with the gut. So we can talk about the oral gut access as well.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

But, it's, it's I think we're in the moment of a big shift in dentistry, which I'm excited about. And, I, I think, you know, dental disease, cavities, gum disease, periodontal disease are the top chronic diseases globally in the world in children and adults. Many people, I don't think, realize that or we just normalized it so much.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

But common isn't normal as we know. And humans are not supposed to be having so much oral dysbiosis and dysfunction.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Yeah, I want to start with that, with the kind of this transition that's happening in dentistry, because obviously it's been a long time that this data has been out there. And of course, I'm sure the body of data has grown substantially. But what are the big impediments to the adoption of this philosophy and kind of integration into the regular dentistry education in practice?

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Because it seems as though from a business point of view, it provides this huge opportunity where dentistry becomes a critical part of success for almost all other chronic diseases. And given the way that, like associations tend to think about that, I'm just surprised that the adoption has been so slow. And of course, the patients are the ones suffering from that.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

Absolutely. I know, it's so funny. I was just speaking about this this morning with my colleague. It's always hard to say. I can give you my perspective and what I think is happening. So first of all, this won't be implemented until the American Dental Association announces it as part of our standard of care. Okay. And puts it into our guidelines, essentially, that we should be, let's say, oral microbiome testing every patient, which I believe we should be.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

But on top of that, and I can speak as a clinician. So dentistry, just like with our colleague physicians, we tend to be a turn and burn, practice. We are overwhelmed with the amount of disease coming our way. We have very limited time to work with patients, specifically the dentists. I think hygienists have a little more time, which is perhaps why they're more in tune to what's actually going on.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

So it's very hard to think about how to shift and spend more time to work a patient up and to add additional things to your already busy work day. Also, insurance isn't reimbursing for oral microbiome testing yet, so this is an insurance issue too. But I think Dennis want to be doing this. But you know, we have to remember dentists are clinicians, but many of them are their business owners too.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

Okay. So they're running their practices. They're managing the team, the air, the 401 K's keeping the lights on and paying the rent. You know, literally writing the checks to pay the lease. And so it's very overwhelming. How do I implement something new that I wasn't taught in dental school, that my colleagues down the street maybe aren't doing yet?

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Dr. Staci Whitman

You have to be a little rogue in a way, and think outside of the box. And and it's challenging and there's risk associated with it, you know, how do I restructure my schedule? Are patients going to pay out of pocket for this? What do I do with this information once I have it? And this is the challenge to there is nowhere right now for dentists to go get this training.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

It's very piecemeal, as I had to find out myself over the past 15 years, have been trying to integrate functional medicine principles into my practice. And the way I look at patients, practice clinical dentistry and also educate. So this is exciting because we I've co-founded the Institute for Functional Dentistry, which is launching very soon, and it is going to be a place where we can implement this education and teach us how to integrate it into their practices.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

And then our next step is to help integrate it into dental schools and programs. And then the next step is to target the insurance companies. But this will take some time. So I don't know the reason. I just think it's overwhelming.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I think I think it makes sense, the whole paradigm shift. And actually, as you go through these, I'm thinking like a lot of our listeners are functional MDS and yeah, they're clinicians and they're probably nodding their heads along with it because they've been the people to break. And, you know, you're right. It's not just new clinical practice. It's a new business model.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

It's new compensation. It's a big behemoth beast.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

And you have to educate the patients on it too. Right. So which is why I'm so thankful

for opportunities like this. Because this is how we start the movement to change our medical care. It is going to come from our patients to some degree. They are the consumer essentially. And so they need to start advocating for these more updated, very science and data driven, protocols.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

But I encourage my physician colleagues listening. You can oral microbiome tests in your office. There are very easy ways. I mean, you're just collecting saliva. And so, you know, I shouldn't be taking this away from Dennis, but if they. Dennis don't step up, I really believe our physician colleagues are going to.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

So let's talk a little bit about oral microbiome, because we talk a ton about gut microbiome. The data around gut microbiome is growing. Everybody knows about the gut microbiome. Now it's, you know, common language where that's really changed from 5 or 10 years ago. Now the mouth is the gateway to the gut. It's its gut tissue really in a lot of ways.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

But tell me a little bit about why the oral microbiome besides availability to test maybe why is it so critical to be looking at that? And how is it kind of different in the role it plays compared to a gut microbiome?

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Dr. Staci Whitman

Yeah. Great question. So the oral microbiome is the second most diverse microbiome in the body. Just why I'm happy it's getting more attention. It directly influences every system in the body. You know I want people to start thinking of the mouth is the gut to your point is the entry way to the beginning of digestion, and of our GI tract, essentially.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

So we need to think of it as such. And so if you're a physician out there treating the gut and cleaning up a patient's, you know, intestinal permeability, let's say, but you're not looking to their oral health, I think you'll be challenged in getting that patient truly.

Well, and think of it this way. So if you have oral dysbiosis, let's say you have gum disease, bleeding gums, inflammation, periodontal disease, cavities.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

Those are signs of systemic inflammation, chronic disease, oral dysbiosis, nutritional and micronutrient deficiencies okay. Those don't just stay in the mouth. We know this. Everything's connected. And so you're going to have downstream effects. But also we swallow 2000 times a day. So we are seeding our gut with the bacteria from our mouth innumerable times a day. And so what are the impacts of this?

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Dr. Staci Whitman

Well, we know the oral microbiome does influence the gut microbiome. And we are definitely at the beginning of a lot of this conversation, which is exciting. So we need a lot more research and studies to see how everything interacts. But what happens in the mouth impacts the gut and vice versa. And I think with our patients, we have to be cleaning up the gut.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

I think I would like diners to know more about gut health, and I would like physicians to know more about oral health if these are your targets. But we do know, you know, the oral bacteria, not only if you have gum disease, inflammation that will create systemic inflammation, okay, and an immune response. But if your gums bleed, let's call those leaky gums.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

All right. So if you have bleeding gums, you now have an entry point, a way a vector for oral bacteria to enter the circulatory system, the lymphatic system. And they catch a free ride and they end up in places they shouldn't like our heart, like our joints, like our uterus, like our colon and our pancreas. But they're also, releasing endotoxins, exo toxins, you know, like polysaccharides.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

There is, you know, there's an immune response. So a cytokine, response to many of these things. And we're finding oral bacteria, mostly is causal rate. I'm sorry. Mostly

it's correlation right now, but there are some causal research studies coming out that link to cancer, specifically pancreatic cancer and colon cancer, Alzheimer's and dementia and cardiovascular issues.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

You know, nitric oxide is impacted by the oral bacteria as well as our sinus, bacteria and sinuses, and fertility issues, which we can get to in, in pregnancy outcome challenges. I mean, miscarriages can be linked to periodontal disease, autoimmune disease, mood disorders, gut dysbiosis. So it goes on and on. It's really it's truly every system in the body can be tied back to the oral microbiome.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

And these microbes are profoundly powerful. I mean, we know that. So we can't just focus on the gut microbiome. We're learning now. There's the skin microbiome in the vaginal microbiome. And so how do all of these communicate to one another and influence on one another is exciting. But it's it's profoundly important as a clinician.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Yeah, I really believe that. Just like we have like vitamins and herbs, we will develop the skills that and knowledge and awareness to really have more targeted microbiome treatments. Like right now, most brands have like a probiotic, right, with a couple of brands like, you know, pendulum, mutagenic, some that have more targeted. But I think overall that's going to become a category, maybe even a pharmaceutical category, where you have very targeted approaches for different microbiomes and different reasons, which is really exciting because we're moving from this, like sterility complex into a true understanding of the positive role that these like critical, not just positive critical role that microbes play in our health.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

It's really fast.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

I absolutely agree with you. And we are seeing I love pendulum. I mean, Rez biotic is another brand, you know, that's targeting the lung microbiome and the gut lung axis.

So I again, I think in ten years we'll look back at this time and say, oh how cute. You know.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton
Maybe.

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Dr. Staci Whitman
We were trying so hard, but and just individualized medicine based on data, you know, data driven protocols for bio individual treatments. I think that's really exciting. Yeah. But most importantly, you know, I think a lot of people now we're doing gut mapping and, you know, testing of stool as part of their optimization protocols. But I encourage everyone to look at their oral microbiome.

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Dr. Staci Whitman
And I will share a story. I have a close family member who's very healthy. She's in her 80s. She acts like she's in her 60s. Excellent oral checkups. Goes every six months. And I thought, you know, let me just test your oral microbiome. So I did, and she was through the roof with elevated EF nucleate. Now we would never have known this.

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Dr. Staci Whitman
Have we not tested in EF? Nucleate is linked to colon cancer. And she has a history of colon cancer in her family. So we cleaned her up. You know, we put her on a protocol and reduced those numbers, to get into healthy ranges. And I feel so much better about the next decade of her life and beyond, because this is something that it was a preventative approach.

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Dr. Staci Whitman
But had we not tested, there was no way you would have known until the signs and symptoms came. Who knows how many years down the road. So, there's a lot of information we can have. And certainly if we're working with couples trying to conceive, I wish every fertility clinic on the planet started talking about oral health and testing their couples oral microbiomes, because we know I just biotic oral microbiome and patients with infection or periodontal disease in their mouth.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

They can take 2 to 3 more months to conceive. It can impact sperm mobility, sperm motility. And again, as I mentioned, pregnancy outcomes, you know, pre low, low birth weight, you know, early delivery and the miscarriages too. So it's really important.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Yeah. Have you seen the data on that. We can talk about this like you're getting me started. We could talk about this particular topic for hours and hours because I've got a million questions and I'd love to pick your brain on, but have you seen, like the information around? What's interesting to me is this is like a generational issue as well, because we used to think that in the womb, babies were sterile or like the womb was a sterile environment.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

We know that's not true. Now there's a microbiome in meconium, which is a baby's first bowel movement. So in order for that to happen, we know that they they basically have a gut microbiome in utero. So it's not through birth that they start their microbiome seeding that impacts it. But if we roll it back there is an in utero gut microbiome in the baby.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Now when they look at that, it's connected to the placental microbiome. And we look at placental microbiome that is most connected to mom's oral microbiome. And that is so fascinating to me. And I think about the they also believe that that is related to the timing of birth, like you said, like pre-term birth or late delivery. There's just so many connections there that I'm amazed we're not spending more time figuring that out.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Right.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

Because we know it's the probably the answer to most everything. Right?

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Absolutely. Yeah. I'm obsessed with the reproductive microbiome. And I think we have like about 30% of infertility cases are unexplained. And I think as we get more into microbiome understanding and reproduction, I think a lot of those are going to fall into that category. I was talking with a clinician about a case yesterday of unexplained infertility. And it's like, you know, the patient had, painful intercourse.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And like a lot of other signs that there was like inflammation going on in her pelvis. And it's like, okay, well, let's take a microbiome approach and I'll be curious to see how she lands with that patient because.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

But has anyone looked in her mouth?

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I probably not, and I'll actually follow up with her. I know that we've had this conversation, but then it's really interesting because I think if you're trying to conceive or you're pregnant right now, you might think, oh gosh, like, I didn't go for those periodic cleanings that were recommended. And there is a timing issue too, because you really have to treat it before even before a preconception period.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Can you talk a little bit about that and why?

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Dr. Staci Whitman

Yeah, I mean, ideally you want to clean up this system before we can see. But, you know, not everyone has this luxury. But yeah. So if you have an, feeling root canal or a, infection in the mouth, gum inflammation and this includes for the partner at moms get blamed for everything. The women get blamed for everything.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

It takes two to tango. Okay? We both need to have optimized microbiomes. But you want to clean up the system to ensure that as to to your point, inflammation is down, the systems optimize. You know, that we're ready that hormone pathways are optimized, for, for for for conception and then beyond that that we are properly, utilizing and growing our baby through nutrient absorption.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

So the gut is absorbing nutrients efficiently and making them bioavailable to really help, you know, source and grow that child. Because what we're seeing this is a side note. There is an epidemic right now in hyperplastic enamel in children that's under mineralized enamel in the teeth. This is starting in utero. So this these are mineral and nutrient deficiencies or environmental exposures and toxins that a mother is exposed to.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

And I believe to the oral microbiome we're going to learn more starts in utero as well. You know it's not just the gut. There is actually an oral microbiome starting as well. And so how are these all communicating to each other. And you know, and then we add medical interventions through modern birthing practices, which I'm not here to advocate or one way or the other.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

But, you know, there's more intervention than there used to be. There's more medications, more antibiotics, you know, more caesareans. And so how is that impacting the child also, especially in those first thousand days of life, which we know is so critical for microbiome development in in a baby, and beyond. And so to your point, there's this. So yeah, why aren't we spending more time on this?

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Dr. Staci Whitman

Like, who can I talk to at the NIH? But I see a shift happening. I mean, just things like this. We're talking about it. And there's quite frankly, a lot of money here in biotech to be had. And but I am I'm starting to see this at conferences already more tailored, protocols. I just think we need more research to, to, to back it up.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

But, it's an exciting time for sure.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Definitely. Now I want to come back to this kind of like, specific clinical approach, but I think there's still some learning for our listeners around other impacts with oral health and oral microbiome. And of course, we're a hormone podcast. So I got to start there. We know that there's like major shifts in the microbiome throughout life and throughout hormonal, you know, periods of change puberty, pregnancy, perimenopause, menopause.

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Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Are there similar shifts in the oral microbiome when it comes to these kind of hormonally charged times of life?

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Dr. Staci Whitman

Oh yes. Yeah. So I thank you for mentioning puberty too, because so many, teenagers get blamed for poor oral hygiene, and it's actually hormones. We have estrogen receptors in our gum tissue. So generally during surges or changes in hormone hormones, we will have more gum inflammation and bleeding gums and things. And and so this is preliminary. You know, we definitely need more, research around this.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

But how hormones influence the oral microbiome, it does tend to lead to a more dis biotic environment. There, you know, it can impact salivary flow that can impact the oral microbiome. So the there's alterations and so we tend to have more pathogenic bacteria during that time, in less diversity as well. So this is where supporting a patient oral hygiene, seeing the dentist regularly diet, lifestyle, hydration all make a big difference.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

And certainly most women have experienced this too during pregnancy. And then part of my passion is also speaking about perimenopause and menopause. And you

know, how shifts in estrogen and progesterone are changing our oral health as well. This is when a lot of women might report temple mandibular joint issues, because we know progesterone impacts collagen synthesis.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

Teeth might feel like they're shifting. We have a periodontal ligament which is made of fibers, collagen fibers that can be impacted through hormonal changes. And this is partly why I too I'm excited that we're talking more about hormone replacement therapy, staying ahead of this because the long term impacts can be significant once we go beyond the point of no return, if you will.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

And unfortunately, especially in pregnancy, we've made women afraid of going to the dentist or in these times, for various reasons. And so I think we need to shift that. And, and within reason, within safety to say we need to stay up on these things. And if there's infection in the mouth, we need to get rid of it in this can include bad dentistry.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

Unfortunately, I think dinosaur is to blame for a lot of these issues. And that can impact our hormones, too. You know, if you're having chronic inflammation, you're in pain. You're going to have elevated cortisol. And elevated cortisol impacts salivary health and it decreases salivary flow. And if you don't have enough saliva, you have dry mouth and dry mouth leads to cavities and gum disease.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

So there is, definitely a trajectory here where it's important to discuss. And, you know, low testosterone in men. I mean, that impacts their oral health, too. They tend to get more bone loss, fiber detachment. So more periodontal disease also. And so we're we've seen a surge in that. Right low. So it's important to discuss.

00:27:15:14 - 00:27:30:08

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

It's really fascinating. It's like there you are I mean there's this kind of bidirectional impact where you have the oral microbiome that contributes to systemic problems

and maybe hormone imbalance. And then additionally, the way that hormone changes impacts the oral microbiome.

00:27:30:13 - 00:27:55:14

Dr. Staci Whitman

Yes, yes, it's cyclical. Absolutely. You know, especially for the poor pregnant mom, it's I mean, up to 75% of women experience pregnancy gingivitis. And it's just it's really hard. And they can have long term impact impacts losing bone around their teeth. If someone is insane on top of it and educating them. And again, so many women are terrified to go to the dentist.

00:27:55:14 - 00:28:09:00

Dr. Staci Whitman

But if they were just told, well, this is hormonal, this too will pass. But actually you need to be more on top of your oral hygiene more than ever right now. And how could we target and support your oral microbiome during this time?

00:28:09:02 - 00:28:25:17

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

What would you say? Because I think that is a big fear for a lot of women. And, you know, a lot of pregnant women. And I know my dentist told me that, like, that increased sensitivity and even bleeding with flossing and things that maybe you never had can happen in pregnancy. Yeah. I've had four pregnancies experience that with all of them.

00:28:25:17 - 00:28:32:19

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And it did pass. But what element of that is normal? And when should women know to like, seek help? Because it's beyond normal.

00:28:32:25 - 00:29:05:23

Dr. Staci Whitman

Yeah, I would say it's always normal. Okay. I think it's just it's because of surges in our hormones and in chews. And then as well, you'll notice toward the end of your pregnancy, women report their teeth shift sometimes also because relaxin has kicks in. And that changes the periodontal ligament around our teeth. But I think the biggest thing is it's not to say it's not normal, it's just to say, well, maybe we need different protocols to stay up to up on things so that this doesn't turn into something that, instead of being fairly acute, turns into something more chronic.

00:29:05:25 - 00:29:26:03

Dr. Staci Whitman

And I know so many women that just don't go to the dentist at all when they're pregnant because they're scared because of, I would say, antiquated guidelines. That that made even dentists afraid of touching a pregnant woman just a little bit. You're good. I'll see you after the baby comes. So I like women to go in more frequently.

00:29:26:05 - 00:29:53:22

Dr. Staci Whitman

Just for cleanings, maybe. Or just really staying up on things from an oral hygiene perspective. And and nutritionally and unfortunately, so many women have a hard time with certain foods and say, nutrient optimized. So making sure you're working with your provider about if you need supplementation, you know, how can we ensure that you are getting all your essential nutrients and fat soluble vitamins and minerals that are all important for dental development of your child and arguably their oral microbiome?

00:29:53:22 - 00:29:54:23

Dr. Staci Whitman

To.

00:29:54:26 - 00:30:13:10

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

That's a really great point. I know that when it comes to menopause, we talk about lower estrogen levels impacting bone health. But can you speak a little bit to the impact on the teeth? And I think people kind of think bone and teeth are the same and they're not quite the same. So maybe you can start by sharing like what's similar, what's different between bone and teeth.

00:30:13:10 - 00:30:20:25

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And then is there an impact in menopause on like the actual makeup of the teeth, the mineralization of the teeth or the health?

00:30:20:28 - 00:30:43:07

Dr. Staci Whitman

Yeah. I wouldn't say it's much with teeth directly, except it can impact your salivary health and your saliva is what you're exchanging minerals, calcium and phosphorus

ions with your teeth to keep them. Healthy, especially during acid attacks, which is essentially any time we eat. Okay. So anytime we eat, part of the digestive process is to break our food down.

00:30:43:07 - 00:31:14:15

Dr. Staci Whitman

So the pH of the mouth is lower, our saliva comes in, it buffers it, neutralizes it re mineralized, it pushes minerals back into the teeth. So if you have low salivary health, that's all going to be imbalanced. So that's how it could directly impact teeth I would say. But mostly what we see is more the tissue. So the gum tissue and the the attachments in the bone, and many women also will complain of burning mouth syndrome or metallic taste in their mouth too.

00:31:14:18 - 00:31:33:02

Dr. Staci Whitman

And there is a phrase that we can actually see perimenopause and menopause in the mouth before maybe a woman even notices that she has it. And we can tell by the the health of the tissues is kind of out of nowhere. Nothing's changed. But all of the sudden we're seeing attachment loss. She's complaining out of burning mouth or weird, sensations in the mouth.

00:31:33:02 - 00:31:41:18

Dr. Staci Whitman

It's just uncomfortable. She feels dry a lot. The tissues will dry. The teeth are shifting. We're starting to probe. You know, when a dinosaur goes three or.

00:31:41:20 - 00:31:50:10

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

What is the worst? I'm sorry. We're saying God is like, I'm sorry. I love going to the dentist. But when they say they're going to do that, it like, it's like nails on a chalkboard.

00:31:50:14 - 00:32:23:08

Dr. Staci Whitman

I know this is where I was going to help us, I think, because there's ways to, to, screen a bit better than that is it's pretty barbaric. And archaic. I completely agree with you. But, you know, and also so we can have bad sleep during these phases and that can impact our airway health. So inflammation in the body during some of these hormonal cycles and changes, it can, change the way the muscles there are myo

functional balances.

00:32:23:08 - 00:32:48:00

Dr. Staci Whitman

And we can get more inflammation and redundant tissues. And we start becoming mouth breathers on this. There's a big uptick in this in perimenopause. And menopause in women. And it's very underdiagnosed. And this can impact the oral microbiome too. So if you mouth breathe, we dry out our tissues, we're losing the benefit of our saliva. Our sleep is incredibly important for our health.

00:32:48:02 - 00:33:16:06

Dr. Staci Whitman

And also, the pH drops. Not to mention, it impacts our hormones, too, like cortisol shifts. And we're not getting into deep, restorative sleep. And, you know, you'll just feel terrible if your mouth breathing, snoring. And and this is a continuum. And so sleep disorder breathing often can lead to sleep apnea as well. And we know that chronic mouth breathing can impact the oral microbiome in the gut microbiome too.

00:33:16:08 - 00:33:18:03

Dr. Staci Whitman

For, for various different pathways.

00:33:18:03 - 00:33:37:03

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

So so I had a personal experience with that with my son because he is he always has had like allergies and congestion, and he would get cavities all the time, even as a young child. And I'm a natural by the doctor. We eat like salmon and cucumbers and vegetables like that literally pristine diet like none of the.

00:33:37:03 - 00:33:57:02

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And I pay attention to what you put online like no goldfish crackers and the raisins and all these things that we know. And we can talk about that. I'm sure parents have that questions that we'll get into, like kind of your tips around that. But really interestingly, that's really where I started to research the impact of mouth breathing, because I think that was his big driver for getting so many calories and many calories cavities.

00:33:57:09 - 00:34:29:20

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And it was when we got his allergies kind of in better check that his cavities stopped. Now he's 13 and he's really not experiencing any, which is great. Although he developed type one diabetes when he was nine. And I think about the role of that with like the oral microbiome in his gut and the impact on his immune system and just the complexity of these and the connections of these and why, you know, this goes to show you why something that might seem so small can be so impactful, like the case you gave of your family member with, like, maybe you prevented a case of colon cancer.

00:34:29:20 - 00:34:39:28

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

How amazing is that? Just by restoring oral health, which relatively compared to chemotherapy, radiation surgery, like, wouldn't we rather spend our time and money there?

00:34:40:00 - 00:35:05:14

Dr. Staci Whitman

Absolutely not. Well, I have so many comments. What you just said. So number one, I'm so happy you figured that out. Let me speak about blood sugar real quick and then we'll go back to airway. So, you know, periodontitis and diabetes are bidirectional. I had a mom reach out to me on social media from Australia fairly recently, thanking me for a post idea that I honestly don't even remember doing.

00:35:05:16 - 00:35:25:26

Dr. Staci Whitman

Because her son was diagnosed with type one diabetes. They didn't know what was wrong with him and that his teeth were just crumbling. And it was because of blood sugar imbalances in his saliva in his salivary health. So again, you can't underestimate the power of saliva. But going back to airway, the first thing I think of.

00:35:25:28 - 00:35:46:03

Dr. Staci Whitman

So I'm, I have a very specific patient population. I'm very fortunate. Everyone tends to be very motivated. And on top of these things, as you are. And so many of them come in and their kids are eating salmon and they're eating cucumbers and they're eating this great diet, but they still have decay. The first thing I think about is, are they breathing through their mouth?

00:35:46:05 - 00:36:09:27

Dr. Staci Whitman

Mouth breathing is one of the top reasons for decay. And it is again, is because if Pas and microbial shifts that are happening through mouth breathing, our saliva is lost. Dry mouth, zero stone me out. We see this with cancer patients undergoing like radiation and chemotherapy therapy. Procedures, protocols. So please don't ignore if how your child or you are breathing.

00:36:09:27 - 00:36:32:18

Dr. Staci Whitman

But then speaking of food. So ideally a whole food diet of course. But I think what so many parents don't realize and we're stuck in this busy, busy, modern society. We're on the go and we're doing the best we can. But these ultra processed foods, these hyper palatable foods, these packaged foods, they're very much impacting your oral microbiome.

00:36:32:18 - 00:36:55:00

Dr. Staci Whitman

And so the way I teach my patients, my pediatric patients, I say we need to feed our good guys. We need to eat the rainbow. It's the prebiotic fibers, the polyphenols. That's what the good guys want to eat. And then the pathogens, they like fermentable carbohydrates. So those are the goldfish crackers. The chips, the pretzels, the granola bars, the fruit snacks, the fruit leathers, the dried fruit, the go-gurt.

00:36:55:00 - 00:37:17:28

Dr. Staci Whitman

It's all those things that are marketed to be quick and easy and maybe relatively healthy because we think, well, there's not a cookie. It's not a, you know, a brownie, but they're sticky carbohydrates and that's feeding pathogenic bacteria in the body. And you're going to get more of a pathogenic biofilm, and you're going to have more of a dysbiosis when you're eating foods like this.

00:37:17:28 - 00:37:41:18

Dr. Staci Whitman

And you'll hear, like the carnivore community, they'll say, oh, I don't even brush and floss my teeth, you know, and I I'm not advocating for this, but in a way, I don't totally disagree. Because their biofilm is probably relatively light and healthy, to be honest, because they're not feeding the pathogenic bacteria. And, you know, they're really feeding their commensal and their beneficial bacteria.

00:37:41:21 - 00:38:02:13

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Yeah. I mean, it's interesting to me to think about like kind of the origin of this. And you might agree or disagree, but like the West and Price Foundation like West and Price is a dentist and he was looking at health factors and, you know, not just of the mouth but otherwise and the connection to Whole Foods and a whole foods diet, our ancestral traditional diet and his connection initially was oral health.

00:38:02:15 - 00:38:26:29

Dr. Staci Whitman

Yeah, yeah, I love West and Price. He's like, he's the father of functional dentistry. And he spoke not only of yes, what nutrients are missing. Why are we having this resurgence of dental disease, which we saw pick up from when we went from a hunter gatherer society to an agrarian society to the industrial revolution? You know what happened during this time?

00:38:26:29 - 00:38:51:27

Dr. Staci Whitman

Our food shifted so much, and we now are nutrient deficient, so we're mineral deficient specifically. Magnesium is really important. And then fat soluble vitamins vitamin D, vitamin K, a specifically really help oral health as well. And he also spoke about how the human skull is shrinking. So ancestrally, we used to have big wide jaws, nice wide teeth.

00:38:51:27 - 00:39:13:05

Dr. Staci Whitman

We had we were, obligate nasal breathers as humans. And now everybody mouth breathes, go to any airport and just watch, people. How are they walking forward head posture, open mouth, low tongue, like Napoleon Dynamite. But if you look at skulls, they're getting narrow. They're almost just, you know, smush and with that, we're getting high, narrow palates.

00:39:13:05 - 00:39:37:13

Dr. Staci Whitman

Deviated septum means our sinuses are shrinking. Our tongue doesn't have space to fit in our jaws anymore, so it gets pushed forward or it falls back, which leads to mouth breathing, which leads to snoring. And Western spoke about this is due to how we're not chewing as much as we used to. We used to chew for multiple hours a day

foraging, and now we chew for just minutes a day.

00:39:37:13 - 00:40:00:27

Dr. Staci Whitman

Everything's mash, mash, swallow. And it's those outward forces. Form follows function and it's those outward forces from mastication, starting with breastfeeding that grows the face, that spreads the palate and really creates the airway. And there's a book, *Breath* by James Nester. If people are interested in this, I highly recommend it, because airway is a huge component of your patient's health, too.

00:40:00:29 - 00:40:23:06

Dr. Staci Whitman

So it's not just their gum health in their dental health. And do they have a failing root canal? How are they breathing and what is their skull shape and their jaw shape like? It's very important this gets overwhelming, but it's a big piece that's missing because if a patient's not breathing optimally, that will impact every system in the body, including the oral and gut microbiome.

00:40:23:08 - 00:40:29:27

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

That's awesome. We'll make sure we put that link to the book in the show notes so we can check it out. I'm interested in checking that out for sure.

00:40:30:00 - 00:40:33:13

DUTCH

We'll be right back.

00:40:33:16 - 00:40:59:22

DUTCH

Here at Precision Analytical, we've launched the biggest update to our report since 2013. The new and enhanced report puts the most actionable hormone insights right on page one, making it faster and easier to interpret. You'll see a reimaged summary page, upgraded visuals for estrogen and cortisol metabolism, and an all new about your results section. What we call the DUTCH does a 12 point framework that helps you understand your patient's hormone story in minutes.

00:40:59:24 - 00:41:23:03

DUTCH

It's a smarter, simpler, and more insightful DUTCH experience. From now through

December 19th, 2025, all registered DUTCH providers can order five DUTCH Complete or DUTCH Plus kits for 50% off. Give us a call or visit [DUTCH test.com/order](https://dutchtest.com/order) now. Must be a registered DUTCH provider. Promotion not available through distributors can mix and match DUTCH Complete and DUTCH Plus kits pre-paid only.

00:41:23:03 - 00:41:31:09

DUTCH

No drop ships cannot be combined with any other offer. Kits must be purchased by December 19th, 2025.

00:41:31:12 - 00:41:34:01

DUTCH

Welcome back to the DUTCH podcast.

00:41:34:04 - 00:41:52:04

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I just a side note if you're ever in Boston, there's a great museum like Harvard University has this great system of museums, and they're so cheap to get into, but they actually have a natural history museum. And it's small, but it's really rich, and they have really cool skeletal exhibits, including human skeletons, which I think probably you need special permission to do now.

00:41:52:04 - 00:41:53:24

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

But these are like from the 1950s.

00:41:54:01 - 00:42:15:13

Dr. Staci Whitman

Yeah. I really like looking at ancestral. Skulls. And I encourage everyone, if you go to the Natural History Museum, look at what our skulls used to look like. They were huge and broad and wide and straight teeth. No orthodontist, no dentist. Why is that? And no cavities. Humans didn't get cavities. We're one of the only species that gets dental decay.

00:42:15:13 - 00:42:37:11

Dr. Staci Whitman

Besides our domesticated pets. Maybe certain tribes where there was high fruit or honey content. But why is that? Why is there been such a surge of dental disease? It was the industrial revolution. The agricultural revolution, the industrial revolution. It's

once we started packaging and milling and processing food. That's when we saw a surge in general disease.

00:42:37:11 - 00:42:47:18

Dr. Staci Whitman

And how do we want to correct that? We cracked it with products and ingredients and fluoride. And, you know, it's a Band-Aid. It's we need to address the elephant in the room.

00:42:47:21 - 00:43:04:25

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Yeah. I want to talk a little bit about what we can do, like what we should be doing proactively. But I think the last piece, because we are the DUTCH podcast, is like more understanding the connection between hormones and oral health. Is that something that you think testing is important for, or, you know, is it the oral health informs?

00:43:04:25 - 00:43:17:13

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

While you really should have your hormones checked or that hormonal testing whether it's cortisol, estrogen and progesterone, testosterone should influence the way we care for our oral microbiome in oral health.

00:43:17:15 - 00:43:40:25

Dr. Staci Whitman

I mean, it's bidirectional. Again, wouldn't it be nice if we just routinely tested patients for both? So I certainly think if you are seeing a patient in your chair, let me say you're I'm speaking to Dennis, and, you're suspecting maybe there's hormonal imbalances, particularly in a perimenopausal or menopausal woman. Okay, well, let's not get to menopause.

00:43:40:25 - 00:43:53:14

Dr. Staci Whitman

Let's say we want to be upstream. Right? So I would encourage, of course, them to take a hormone test, so that we can stay ahead of it. But with oral microbiome testing, I think everyone should be oral microbiome testing.

00:43:53:15 - 00:43:58:27

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Is there a company that you recommend that's, like, commercially available to

consumers or one that doc should look out to?

00:43:59:01 - 00:44:22:24

Dr. Staci Whitman

Yeah, there's a couple I really like. Bristle like a toothbrush. Bristol. It's direct to consumer. It's a great interface. They get protocols. It uses shock metagenomics which is my preference. But zoom with a V I'm seeing them more at functional medicine conferences and they're doing very cool stuff with bio individualized treatment planning too. So those are a couple of my favorites.

00:44:22:24 - 00:44:26:27

Dr. Staci Whitman

But there's so many popping up now. I mean, it really is exploding.

00:44:27:00 - 00:44:45:08

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Great. So let's talk a little bit about like a kind of a typical case if a new patient came in to see you I know you do pediatrics. So your population is a bit different. What is like the typical situation for like the average American that you, you see on a day to day basis there like functional dentists are seeing.

00:44:45:10 - 00:44:53:15

Dr. Staci Whitman

Yeah I see pediatrics. But I consult on adults too. And I'm looking to open, a female clinic, a women's.

00:44:53:15 - 00:44:54:03

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Amazing.

00:44:54:03 - 00:45:23:15

Dr. Staci Whitman

Clinic as well to work more directly with fertility doctors and hormones and things as well. So stay tuned. Yeah. The typical thing I see, gum disease, I mean, gum disease is very rampant. I think people aren't flossing and they're snacking and sipping much more than they realize. So just like we should eat on a schedule, ideally for the migrating motor complex and to preserve our gut health, we shouldn't be snacking and sipping all day.

00:45:23:15 - 00:45:46:28

Dr. Staci Whitman

That is influencing the microbiome. It leaves our mouth in a constant state of acidity. So, people think they're doing a great job and mostly everyone is, but there's just small tweaks that can be made that could really help optimize people better. I see a lot of dehydration. People are so dehydrated and then stress. Don't underestimate the impact of cortisol on your oral health.

00:45:46:28 - 00:46:15:25

Dr. Staci Whitman

And it's not only your gum health, but also your clenching and grinding like so many people are wearing their teeth and getting micro fractures and fractures and breaking fillings and cracking crowns and stress management should be part of dental management as far as I'm concerned. So, those are some of the big ones. But I think getting don't ignore your gums if you have inflamed gums, if you're a patient report, they never floss.

00:46:15:25 - 00:46:36:20

Dr. Staci Whitman

If they do and their gums bleed or we call it pink in the sink when you spit after you floss and brush into the sink, is there pink? That's a sign of inflammation, period. Okay. And it's it's systemic. That's not just seen in the mouth. So we need to get that under control. Just as you would any other inflammation that you saw in your patient and in the body.

00:46:36:20 - 00:46:40:10

Dr. Staci Whitman

So really look toward their gum health, too. It's important.

00:46:40:13 - 00:46:57:27

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

The flossing piece is such a hard piece for people to get it. And, personally, like, I've had it as my New Year's resolution. I'm like, obviously the most boring person on the planet because my New Year's resolution was, I want to floss. Great regularly. And at this year I'm finally into it because I bought this late flosser, which is just like vibrating flosser.

00:46:57:27 - 00:46:59:29

Dr. Staci Whitman

Oh, I know slate well. They're amazing. Yeah, they're.

00:46:59:29 - 00:47:13:06

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Amazing. And actually, I got it for myself and my husband for Christmas, and he told me it was the worst Christmas gift he'd ever received. And, that I might as well return his. And now I'm. He sees me using mine, and you can change the heads. And he's tried it, and he's like, can you actually buy me one of those?

00:47:13:06 - 00:47:13:12

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Because.

00:47:13:13 - 00:47:19:11

Dr. Staci Whitman

Oh, yeah. You're like, I'm preventing you getting colon cancer. That's the best gift I could give you. I think I'll.

00:47:19:12 - 00:47:36:11

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Make sure that I tell him that it happened with him or what I love about it is that it has these, like, massagers in the front and back that I feel like really, have changed my gum health. Yeah, personally, and I read a statistic recently that if you don't floss, you're missing about 40% of your surfaces of your teeth.

00:47:36:17 - 00:47:59:27

Dr. Staci Whitman

It's true. Yeah. Because your your tooth. This is. Yes. Your tooth has five surfaces. Okay. If you're brushing, you're only cleaning three of the five. So 3/5. So you have to be flossing. But also think of it this way. If anyone's played guitar when you first pick up a guitar, your fingers are raw. You have to be practicing daily to develop those calluses.

00:47:59:27 - 00:48:21:27

Dr. Staci Whitman

It's the same with your gums. We want very resilient, healthy gums. This is the it's a barrier from the outside world to the inside world. We don't want to create a way, for bacteria, viruses, parasites, all these things to get into the system. So we need a very healthy mucosa, in gingival tissue. So don't take it for granted.

00:48:21:27 - 00:48:31:16

Dr. Staci Whitman

But flossing is hard. I mean, do what works for you. Here are some tips. Get a suction cup mirror and do it in the shower. Okay. Oh.

00:48:31:17 - 00:48:32:03

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Good idea.

00:48:32:06 - 00:48:51:24

Dr. Staci Whitman

Get a, cordless water pick and do it in the shower or in the bathtub if you have kids. Floss picks. They're fine. Leave them in your car. Leave a bowl by your nightstand. Leave some where you watch TV or read your book at night. You. We need a habit stack to, you know, like, we know this.

00:48:51:24 - 00:49:08:21

Dr. Staci Whitman

Like you're not just going to start doing something after four decades of never doing it. You have to find ways to trick yourself into it. Leave little sticky notes, use a tool that you think is fun, like the slate flosser so you have to play around with it. But I just mostly want people that really prioritize it. I think it's more important than brushing.

00:49:08:21 - 00:49:09:19

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I'm going to ask you that.

00:49:09:26 - 00:49:20:18

Dr. Staci Whitman

I will be on my deathbed yelling that if I was at a desert island, you're like, you can bring a toothbrush or floss. I always say floss. Always, always, always. Would I say floss? So yeah, that's awesome.

00:49:20:21 - 00:49:33:03

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Now, if you could wave a magic wand and get the average American or the our average listener here to change like five practices for flossing regularly is number one. What else would hit the list for you?

00:49:33:05 - 00:49:59:05

Dr. Staci Whitman

Stop snacking. I just think we eat too much. And I want people to be focusing on protein rich foods starting that early in the day, eating on a schedule, ideally every two hours. That's going to help hormone balancing too. We know that. So we just snack and sip too much. And this includes your drinks. Like, people saying while it's just my coffee, it's just a little bit of sugar in my coffee.

00:49:59:05 - 00:50:14:16

Dr. Staci Whitman

Will, that will influence your microbiome. Certainly. And you know, the acidity as well. Sparkling water. People are like, well, you know, it's fine. And I'm not saying don't drink. Don't drink these things. I drink so much. Don't get me wrong.

00:50:14:19 - 00:50:17:26

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I know I was going to ask you if you guys are just listening. My face like.

00:50:17:29 - 00:50:18:21

Dr. Staci Whitman

I did.

00:50:18:24 - 00:50:22:16

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I heard this online. I'm like, oh God, even soda water, we can't even do soda water.

00:50:22:19 - 00:50:49:25

Dr. Staci Whitman

Because it's acidic. So. Exactly. I mean, here's the thing. You might be a human if you go in and you have no issues and you have no sensitivity, and your hygienist or Dennis isn't saying you're you have enamel wear, don't worry so much about it. But if you go in all the time and you keep getting cavities and you keep having issues in your fillings, keep failing and you have all this sensitivity and recession, I mean, you should look toward the acidity of what you're drinking.

00:50:49:25 - 00:51:10:18

Dr. Staci Whitman

And but the biggest thing is, even if you're drinking mineral or soda water, don't sip it

all day. You want to sit down, consume it in a fairly short amount of time. That's the that's the biggest thing we need to give our mouths and our gut to break. Okay, so don't stress out too much about that. But don't forget your drinks.

00:51:10:18 - 00:51:40:15

Dr. Staci Whitman

You know, they're frappuccinos in a kombucha and all of these things that adds up. So that we spoke about airway and snacking and flossing, and nutritionally optimize, you know, we, we have to make sure we're getting all of our minerals and our fat soluble vitamins. What you put on your fork every day influences it's information that you're giving to your cells and to your mitochondria and to your microbes.

00:51:40:15 - 00:52:05:13

Dr. Staci Whitman

Okay. So we want to try to make sure we're getting a wide range of colorful foods every day and fermented foods, a spoonful of fermented foods every day can go such a long way, including supporting the oral microbiome. So the sauerkraut, the kimchi, those homemade naturally fermented pickles. The key for please don't ignore that. It's something I prioritize.

00:52:05:13 - 00:52:17:27

Dr. Staci Whitman

Even at the end of the night, I'll say, oh my gosh, I didn't have anything. I'll take a spoonful of sauerkraut, which I know some people may not find to be super appealing, but it's a mindset shift, right? I'm trying to feed feed the good guys.

00:52:18:00 - 00:52:33:14

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

One trick I have with that is I use a small amount of kefir to take my supplements, and I have trouble swallowing pills and like the thicker liquid, makes it so much easier to go down. So that's the way I sneak it into my like habit stacking, as I always take that with like a little bit of drinkable kefir.

00:52:33:17 - 00:52:54:19

Dr. Staci Whitman

I love that. And then I, I guess I'd say hydration is so important to, you know, we, I just think, I think we're some of us are over obsessed on consuming water. But the problem is our water is devoid of minerals, and salt. And so we can drink a lot of it, but we may not be utilizing and absorbing it appropriately.

00:52:54:19 - 00:53:11:27

Dr. Staci Whitman

So please don't forget to hydrate. But also adding minerals and salt into your water, because that's going to help your spit. Your salivary healthier saliva is this golden elixir in our bodies. And if it is suboptimal, you're going to have a slew of health issues. So please don't ignore your saliva.

00:53:12:00 - 00:53:23:20

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Fabulous. Those are great recommendations. I want to ask about a couple things that I know come up often in my patient conversations regarding oral health, impact of alcohol based mouthwashes.

00:53:23:22 - 00:53:49:25

Dr. Staci Whitman

So the data on this is pretty clear at this point. So alcohol in astringent or carpet bombing the mouth. You know it's just like we're we're over disinfecting. Right. We don't need to kill 99.9% of bacteria as much as the marketing tells us so because these things aren't selective. So they're they're disrupting the pathogenic bacteria, but they can be damaging the commensal bacteria as well.

00:53:49:25 - 00:54:11:21

Dr. Staci Whitman

And the beneficial bacteria, so less is more. Patients always will say, when I say skip the conventional mouthwash, you'll say, well, what do I do instead? I just like water and baking soda, maybe with a sprinkle of high quality salt, because that's going to buffer and neutralize and make the mouth potentially more alkaline where pathogenic bacteria can't thrive.

00:54:11:23 - 00:54:34:17

Dr. Staci Whitman

But also, if you're suffering from chronic halitosis, really bad breath, and you feel like you constantly need gum and mints and mouth rinse, that really strong burning mouth rinse, you have dysbiosis, you have something going on, you have an infection, you have periodontal disease. You have a feeling filling or crown. There is something not normal in this situation.

00:54:34:17 - 00:54:54:27

Dr. Staci Whitman

So please work with your dentist to discover what that is. It can be coming from the gut. It can be coming from the sinuses also and back in the throat also like tonsil stones etc.. So but the studies show so what happens with these alcohol based mouthwashes. They can wipe out the bacteria that like to hang out in the door some of the tongue.

00:54:54:27 - 00:55:23:12

Dr. Staci Whitman

And these are nitrate reducing bacteria. And impact nitric oxide production. And so the studies are showing that patients who chronically use these mouth, for instance, can have higher, blood pressure, high blood pressure, it can impact sexual health. So erectile dysfunction, this basically vasodilation. So cardiovascular health in general. So there's some some links to oral cancer as well with really chronic use.

00:55:23:12 - 00:55:42:00

Dr. Staci Whitman

I think obviously we need more research on that. But it makes sense to me something that that burning I mean, we shouldn't be putting these emulsifiers and surfactants in these foaming agents and these things that are very essentially caustic in the mouth, like, what is that doing to the microbes, but also the mucosa?

00:55:42:02 - 00:55:57:00

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

That kind of brings me to the next one, which is toothpaste, which is I know there's a lot of like kind of like the nano hydroxyapatite type toothpaste available now compared to like a conventional one with foaming agents. Can you talk a little bit about what people should look for in a toothpaste?

00:55:57:02 - 00:56:17:28

Dr. Staci Whitman

Yeah. So, nano hydroxyapatite would be the active ingredient, the mineral mineralization ingredient, if you will. So that's going to be a personal choice. Do you want to use fluoride. Do you want to use micro hydroxyapatite. Nano hydroxyapatite. Theobromine has really great research behind it. Now to for re mineralization. But you want to.

00:56:17:28 - 00:56:19:24

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Look at why isn't there bromine in chocolate.

00:56:20:02 - 00:56:22:05

Dr. Staci Whitman

It is. Yeah. Wow. That's a yeah.

00:56:22:10 - 00:56:23:12

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Another plus on the.

00:56:23:12 - 00:56:53:10

Dr. Staci Whitman

Chocolate I know totally. And it it impacts re mineralization in some studies depending on the formulation. So it can work as well as fluoride too. I love nano hydroxyapatite. I actually really love theobromine too. And regardless so that's your active ingredient. But you do you do want to look at all the other ingredients. So just like we're now cleaning up our cosmetics, and I think we've learned to we don't need to wash our hair is often we don't need all that that foaming in our shampoo.

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Dr. Staci Whitman

And we've maybe switched to different aluminum free deodorants. And there was a transition period potentially we experienced as our skin microbiome shifted. It's the same with toothpaste. So I want people to try to get rid of the sodium laurel sulfate or its derivatives, I would say. And those can be coconut based, but some people are really sensitive to them.

00:57:14:14 - 00:57:39:18

Dr. Staci Whitman

You can get oral ulcerations. It's irritating. The mucosa will dry out the mucosa. But that can shift the microbiome too. So your toothpaste really shouldn't burn or foam. Essential oils. Be careful. I know they sound amazing on paper and it gives us that fresh breath feeling, but they can be anti-microbial and they're not selective. So just be cautious with some of these things.

00:57:39:20 - 00:58:14:13

Dr. Staci Whitman

Triclosan. And there's just a lot of ingredients. Luckily we're moving away for that. So like what do you use. Use what you will use, first of all is my first recommendation.

But I do. If you're suffering from dental issues, I would look to a hydroxyapatite based toothpaste. There's a lot of literature and data behind that. That's it's been approved for consumer safety in the, in the EU and the Health Ministry's in Japan and South Korea are using it almost exclusively now in oral health care products.

00:58:14:13 - 00:58:28:19

Dr. Staci Whitman

So I think there'll be a big shift, and oral health care products, certainly. But but I like a less is more approach. And I want people looking at their toothpaste, reading the ingredients like they read their food ingredients.

00:58:28:22 - 00:58:41:22

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

I love that the next one is I really see this like massive trend towards whitening right now. And I wonder about the impact of a lot of those products on our oral microbiome, but also the health of our teeth. Do you have any thoughts on that?

00:58:42:00 - 00:59:08:23

Dr. Staci Whitman

Absolutely, yeah. Yes. We're an esthetic driven, society, which, you know, I'm all for. I want people feeling good about themselves. Mental health is very important. But I do also worry about over using bleaching products. You know, I have seen on TikTok the hydrogen peroxide trend, and these teeth are just glowing white. But what they don't understand is the biology behind this.

00:59:08:23 - 00:59:32:01

Dr. Staci Whitman

So it's stripping their enamel of minerals and the protective, layer that's necessary. A lot of these kids, you know, their kids to me are going to end up with chronic sensitivity. If not purple nerve damage and eating root canals and all of these things, too. So we just want to be very cautious. I don't love, charcoal toothpaste.

00:59:32:01 - 01:00:14:04

Dr. Staci Whitman

It's far too abrasive, so it can really damage your enamel. But I also under see it in these bleach bleaching agents. Who all of these things are impacting the microbiome in a negative way. Okay. But I, I don't like to say never do it. So just we need to set up realistic expectations. We are so over inundated with filtered images and photoshopped images and veneers and, I'm not here to judge veneers and I want

everyone to do what they want to do, but anything you put in the mouth is shifting your microbiome, whether it's a filling, a veneer, a crown, a grill, whatever you're doing, think about the long term impacts of that,

01:00:14:04 - 01:00:35:16

Dr. Staci Whitman

because it's never going to be as good as your natural tooth structure. I personally would rather patients spend the time and went through like Invisalign or just something. I know it seems not a quick fix is veneers, but straighten your teeth a little bit, maybe whiten them a little bit, and then try to just keep your natural teeth as much as you can.

01:00:35:16 - 01:00:58:24

Dr. Staci Whitman

Would be my advice. But because nothing in dentistry lasts forever, and for all of us, they're saying I want to live into my 100, 120. You know, all of these longevity, ideals. Your teeth need to last that long to rise for, at least for now. We don't have the technology yet to regrow teeth. So do you think that when you make these decisions.

01:00:58:24 - 01:01:19:17

Dr. Staci Whitman

But, you know, you know, baking soda and a little bit of hydrogen peroxide occasionally, I think is great. If you want to whiten, your dentist can do whitening procedures for you. I will just say don't overdo it. You know, look, bright white teeth is not a natural two shade.

01:01:20:19 - 01:01:41:27

Dr. Staci Whitman

And everyone knows it's not real. It's just too much. So I hope we transition back to what is more of a universal shade and what's natural. And then there's certain foods like strawberries, have gentle acids in them that can brighten and whiten a little bit, you know, but in avoiding, like, wine and coffee and tea and going in more for cleaning.

01:01:41:27 - 01:01:55:09

Dr. Staci Whitman

And so there's cross white stripes, of course, there's Lumina, who has white stripes made with more botanicals and herbs that it works pretty well. So there's different things out there. But just my biggest thing is don't overdo it.

01:01:55:12 - 01:02:11:06

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Take it easy. Yeah, it's funny when they like, look at in the dentist office, when you ask about whitening, they'll show you kind of that scale. And a lot of people that are already at the whiter end, you know, before they even start. It just doesn't seem that way because it's not that bright white filtered image, like you said, easy online.

01:02:11:09 - 01:02:31:23

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

The last thing I want to talk about is, sweeteners. So I know that you were talking about staying away from things that are ultra processed, but I think a lot of people are concerned about the impact on microbiome. And oral would be a piece of this, too. Of all these artificial sweeteners. And I want to talk about xylitol and just share a little bit about that as well, if you can.

01:02:31:25 - 01:02:35:14

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

As far as like what should people be using? What should they not be using?

01:02:35:16 - 01:03:01:27

Dr. Staci Whitman

Yeah, I know, so xylitol when ingested in higher quantities like with baking let's say or and drinks can be very disruptive to the gut microbiome. But the in the amounts that is used, the data shows that it has a beneficial impact in the mouth because it acts as a prebiotic. And it actually prevents, bacterial adhesion. And can help it can help create better balance of diversity in the mouth, too.

01:03:01:27 - 01:03:33:27

Dr. Staci Whitman

So dentistry loves xylitol in dental products. I don't think we should be cooking with it and eating it and ingesting it. But again, I've seen some concerns with sorbitol and other sweeteners that other brands are using. I haven't seen any significantly impressive data to show that I'm concerned with this. From the oral microbiome standpoint. But I think, again, if you're if you're ingesting it, I know I think it's David Perlmutter speaks of concerns with some of these things.

01:03:33:27 - 01:03:49:09

Dr. Staci Whitman

And, and lactic acid buildup, I believe is what he speaks of or or, you know, sorry, uric acid, uric acid build up. So but again, this is in very large amounts. So most toothpaste doesn't have a lot in it unless you're spitting it out.

01:03:49:15 - 01:03:50:21

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

You're not swallowing. Yeah.

01:03:50:22 - 01:04:12:18

Dr. Staci Whitman

You're not swallowing it I love xylitol in nasal sprays. It's so good in because it changes. It alters the pH, and it will alter the microbiome of the scientists, too. So, I think we're too quick to villainize things. You know, dose does matter, of course, in culture. And the means of exposure matters so much.

01:04:12:18 - 01:04:23:14

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

But in context, you know, what's good for one person may not be tolerable or great for another. So I appreciate you giving me my hot seat questions because I understand it's not always black and white. The answers. Yeah.

01:04:23:16 - 01:04:25:13

Dr. Staci Whitman

So great. Well, human.

01:04:25:15 - 01:04:54:18

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

It's it's been so awesome to have you on today. I'm really happy to get the chance to finally meet you, and really just thankful for all the insights that you shared. I think this is a really a piece, I imagine because we've got a lot of listeners, this might be the first time they've heard this kind of information, and hopefully it transforms the way they think about health and longevity and really gets them thinking about another aspect of their health that generally is easier to control than many, because it's topical, right?

01:04:54:21 - 01:04:59:11

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Yeah. To really be able to make a big impact. So I appreciate the work you're doing and I appreciate you being here.

01:04:59:12 - 01:05:05:08

Dr. Staci Whitman

Thank you. I appreciate the opportunity. Remember to everyone, appreciate your saliva.

01:05:05:11 - 01:05:06:07

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Love saliva.

01:05:06:07 - 01:05:09:05

Dr. Staci Whitman

Love your spit. That's my take home.

01:05:09:08 - 01:05:14:17

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

And lastly, if people want to learn more about the work that you do about your practice, what's the best way for them to connect with you?

01:05:14:21 - 01:05:36:25

Dr. Staci Whitman

Yeah. Thank you so much. Well, I have a website, Doctor KGW.com. And I do a weekly newsletter where I unpack these concepts in more detail because I know this was such a whirlwind, and we could probably speak for hours and hours about some of these things, so check that out. I do see patients still in person in Portland, Oregon.

01:05:36:27 - 01:06:02:07

Dr. Staci Whitman

At Bloom Kids Dentistry. It's pediatric focus. But but stay tuned for potential new business endeavors where I'll see the adult population again. Like I once did. And then I'm on doctor CC, platform on Instagram doctor underscore Staci. So I'm on Instagram, TikTok, all the things with that same handle. And then I am co-founding the Institute for Functional Dentistry too.

01:06:02:07 - 01:06:31:08

Dr. Staci Whitman

And so, I would love everyone to help spread this message. If you are a physician out there and you are, you have a great dentist in your neighborhood that you work with every community, but you just wish they knew more about functional medicine. So

you can work more cohesively. Please share this with them and I would love for them to go through our curriculum because we again, I can speak to all of this on all these podcasts, but then at the end of the day, where do you send these your patients to?

01:06:31:10 - 01:06:43:04

Dr. Staci Whitman

Where do you go? And so we have to create a training institution that is accredited where there's certification, you know, that's evidence based. And so this is what we're creating. It launches in January.

01:06:43:06 - 01:06:48:25

Dr. Jaclyn Smeaton

Wonderful. Well thank you so much. And everyone listening. Thank you for joining us this week. We'll see you next Tuesday.

01:06:48:27 - 01:06:51:07

Dr. Staci Whitman

Thank you.

01:06:51:09 - 01:07:10:10

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