

Tighten wrinkles with better teeth

Before you have plastic surgery to fix droops and wrinkles in the upper and lower jaw, cosmetic dentist Dr. Bruce Hartley says, "Give teeth a chance." That's because many times, worn-down front and back teeth can be the reason the midface sags.

Hartley says his nonsurgical procedure, the "Dental Mid-Face Lift," can help people's faces regain original shapes by restoring front and back teeth to proper heights, sizes and dimensions with bonded porcelain.

"If the teeth are getting ground and shorter," Hartley tells *Consumers Digest*, "then that distance between the nose and chin gets smaller."

What sets the procedure apart from what has been done in the past is "a lot of dentists would just crown all the back teeth, but just leave them at the same height that they started the procedure with," he says. So patients' teeth got fixed, but facial dimensions stayed the same.

Done with a local anesthetic, it generally takes four appointments to get teeth back to proper heights. Temporary additions are placed on teeth to ensure the permanents will be at proper heights. Temps are generally worn for 2 to 3 weeks.

To be a candidate for the "Dental Mid-Face Lift," your teeth have to be ground from front to back. Hartley recommends having wisdom teeth pulled first, and periodontal disease must be addressed beforehand. Cavities get taken care of during the procedure.

While it may not be as painful as plastic surgery, it'll still hurt your pocketbook. It can cost anywhere from \$20,000 to \$40,000, but insurance might help pay for some of it, Hartley says. Other dentists around the country do similar procedures, he adds.

—J. Tehrani



Coughed-up remedy?

Your children are in bed with a cold, coughing and tired. Maybe you can help them catch some zzz's by reaching into the medicine cabinet for...saltwater cold drops? Not a bad idea, according to a study in *Pediatrics*, the journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The study found one common ingredient as well as another found in nearly all cough medicines are no more effective than a sugar syrup placebo in calming kids' nighttime coughs.

Thus, Dr. Ian Paul, chief author of the study and assistant professor at Pennsylvania State Children's Hospital, suggests instead of using cough medicine with dextromethorphan (DM) and diphenhydramine (DPH), parents give their kids the saltwater cold drops to thin mucus and a favorite drink to soothe irritated throats. Paul also suggests giving youngsters non-aspirin pain and fever reducers and using humidifiers or vaporizers to hydrate air.

Paul says DM is in nearly 100 percent of products labeled as cough medicine, and DPH or another antihistamine is in many. DPH is effective for allergies, but not colds, he adds.

In the study, Paul and his colleagues examined 100 children with upper respiratory infections. Those who received a dose of cough medicine did not have a quicker recovery than those given the placebo. Noted effects were drowsiness (DM) and insomnia (DPH).

Thus, Paul tells *Consumers Digest* there is "no reason" for parents to give cough medicine to kids, though he concedes further research is warranted.

In fact, the Consumer Healthcare Products Association, a trade group that represents makers and distributors of over-the-counter medicines, says the study was unfair because children received only one dose of cough syrup, and drugmakers recommend a dose every 6 hours. Paul says there has been no evidence to suggest multiple doses are better than one. **▶**

More diseases linked to smoking

Smokers with a family history of pancreatic, cervical, kidney and stomach cancers, take heed. According to a new study by the U.S. Surgeon General titled *Report on the Health Consequences of Smoking*, lighting up puts you at a greater risk for developing the diseases. The report is the first to link smoking with these cancers. It also warns smokers for the first time that they have an increased chance of abdominal aortic aneurysm, caused by atherosclerosis, a disease that had already been linked to smoking, and acute myeloid leukemia, caused by benzene, which is in cigarette smoke. Also newly added to the watch list are: cataracts, which smokers are two to three times more likely to develop; periodontitis; and pneumonia.

The report found erectile dysfunction and colorectal, liver and prostate cancers may be linked to smoking, but there is not evidence to conclusively blame them on Big Tobacco. For information, logon to www.cdc.gov/tobacco.

