

# Dr. Little's Dental News

Presented by Jeffery Little, D.D.S.



## THE HOLE TRUTH

It is important to distinguish between caries, the Latin word for decay, and a cavity, which is the hole that occurs if the caries has destroyed the tooth enamel and penetrated the tooth's dentin. Caries may first appear as a white or brown spot on tooth enamel. It is an indication that bacterial acids have begun to dissolve calcium and phosphate in the tooth enamel (demineralization). If it is detected early enough, it is possible to remineralize the enamel and stop decay by cleaning the teeth thoroughly, applying topical fluorides, and removing plaque. Otherwise, once a cavity forms, remineralization cannot fill it up. Left untreated, a cavity

will continue to grow until it destroys the entire crown of the tooth.

Cavity-causing bacteria and its resultant damage can be controlled if we deal with bacterial plaque activity on a daily basis. A toothbrush alone, however, cannot do the whole job. It takes the combined effort of conscientious daily brushing and flossing, smart eating, and professional visits to promote total oral health. If it's been too long since you treated your teeth and gums to professional care, now would be a good time to call us for an appointment.

P.S. Dentin is the bone-like tissue that makes up the largest portion of the tooth.

*Dr. Little provides quality family and cosmetic dentistry.*

*His office is located at 344 Placerville Dr., Suite 19, Placerville.*

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