YOUR GUIDE TO WHOLE-HEALTH DENTISTRY

A welcoming introduction to our philosophy, your oral health, and the care options available to you.

Our promise

We will listen to your concerns, explain what we see, discuss appropriate options, and help you make choices that fit your health goals and values.

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Welcome

Dentistry that begins with listening

Welcome to Frenchtown Dental. We care for patients seeking excellent traditional dentistry as well as those who prefer a more biological or holistic approach. You do not need to arrive with all the answers. Our role is to understand your concerns, evaluate your oral health carefully, and help you make informed decisions.

We view the mouth as part of the whole body. Teeth, gums, breathing, sleep, nutrition, inflammation, medications, habits, and medical conditions can all influence one another. That perspective helps us look beyond a single tooth while still providing practical, evidence-informed dental care.

What you can expect from us

We will	We ask you to
Listen without judgment	Share your health history and current medications
Explain findings in understandable language	Tell us about sensitivities, goals, and concerns
Discuss benefits, limitations, risks, and alternatives	Ask questions whenever something is unclear
Respect your priorities and preferences	Partner with us in prevention and follow-through

Individualized care

Not every service in this guide is appropriate for every person. Recommendations are based on your examination, history, imaging when needed, and personal goals.

Your guide at a glance

The information is arranged from everyday foundations to more specialized care

1	**Whole-health dentistry**	How we think about prevention, materials, and individualized care
2	**Keeping your mouth healthy**	Daily habits, diet, saliva, bacteria, and the oral environment
3	**Healthy gums, healthy body**	Recognizing gingivitis and periodontal disease
4	**Medical health and oral health**	Why pregnancy, diabetes, medications, and healing matter
5	**Breathing, sleep, and airway**	Signs to notice in children and adults
6	**Supporting healthy childhood development**	Growth, oral habits, myofunctional therapy, and HealthyStart
7	**Dental materials and restorations**	Thoughtful choices for fillings and crowns
8	**SMART amalgam removal**	Protective measures for mercury amalgam removal
9	**Ozone and supportive therapies**	Where these options may fit and what remains uncertain
10	**Partnering in your care**	How to get the most from your visits

1 Whole-health dentistry

Looking at the tooth, the person, and the larger picture

Whole-health dentistry recognizes that oral health is connected with the rest of the body. It also recognizes that each patient brings different medical needs, sensitivities, experiences, and treatment preferences.

Our approach

- Prevention first: Whenever possible, we help you reduce risk before disease progresses.
- Root-cause thinking: We consider why a problem may be occurring, not only how to repair the damage.
- Thoughtful materials: We discuss restorative materials and select options based on the clinical situation and your preferences.
- Conservative treatment: We preserve healthy tooth structure and use the least invasive appropriate option.
- Collaboration: When appropriate, we coordinate with physicians, ENTs, myofunctional therapists, functional medicine providers, lactation professionals, and other members of your health team.

Balanced, transparent conversations

Some areas of biological and integrative dentistry have stronger scientific support than others. We believe you deserve to know what is well established, what is promising but still developing, and what alternatives are available. Our goal is not to pressure you toward a particular philosophy; it is to help you choose thoughtfully.

The question we keep asking

What option best protects your health, preserves function, respects your goals, and fits the evidence available for your situation?

2 Keeping your mouth healthy

Prevention is more than brushing and flossing

Tooth decay and gum disease develop through an interaction among your body, the bacteria in your mouth, and what those bacteria are regularly exposed to. Bringing those factors into better balance can lower risk.

Daily foundations	Support your oral environment
Brush twice daily for two minutes	Drink water throughout the day
Angle the bristles gently toward the gumline	Address dry mouth early
Clean between teeth every day	Chew food thoroughly to stimulate saliva
Use a water flosser as an adjunct when helpful	Limit frequent sugar and acidic drinks
Choose products recommended for your individual risk	Choose nourishing, less-sticky snacks

Saliva matters

Saliva helps wash away food, buffer acids, support the oral microbiome, and protect tooth structure. Dry mouth can substantially increase the risk of decay. Medications, dehydration, mouth breathing, medical conditions, and sleep can all affect saliva.

Think about frequency

Repeated sipping or snacking can keep the mouth acidic for long periods, even when the total amount seems small. Water between meals and fewer exposure periods are generally kinder to teeth than frequent sweet or acidic drinks and snacks.

Tell us if your mouth feels dry

Dry mouth is not just uncomfortable. It changes your cavity risk and may change the preventive plan we recommend.

3 Healthy gums, healthy body

Gum disease can progress quietly

Gingivitis is early gum inflammation. Gums may look red or puffy and may bleed with brushing or cleaning between the teeth. Gingivitis can often improve with professional cleaning and consistent home care.

Periodontitis is more advanced. Inflammation extends below the gumline and can damage the bone and tissues supporting the teeth. Treatment is needed to control the disease and protect long-term stability.

Signs to notice	Factors that can raise risk
Red, swollen, or tender gums	Plaque and inconsistent home care
Bleeding with brushing or flossing	Tobacco or nicotine exposure
Persistent bad breath or bad taste	Diabetes, especially when poorly controlled
Receding gums or teeth appearing longer	Dry mouth
Loose, shifting, or newly spaced teeth	Some medications and health conditions
A change in your bite	Pregnancy-related hormonal changes

What periodontal therapy does

Scaling removes plaque and hardened deposits from below the gumline. Root planing cleans and smooths affected root surfaces so the tissues can heal and periodontal pockets may become shallower. Ongoing maintenance is essential because periodontitis is controlled rather than permanently cured.

Bleeding is information

Healthy gums generally should not bleed with gentle brushing or interdental cleaning. Please tell us when bleeding is frequent or persistent.

4 Medical health and oral health

Why your complete health history matters

Medical conditions, medications, hormones, nutrition, sleep, and inflammation can affect your mouth and how you respond to dental treatment. Please keep us informed about diagnoses, medication or supplement changes, allergies, pregnancy, and care from other health professionals.

Diabetes

Diabetes and periodontal health can influence one another. Poorly controlled blood sugar may increase the risk and severity of gum disease, dry mouth, fungal infections, and slower healing. Periodontal inflammation may also make blood sugar management more difficult for some people. Regular dental care and coordination with your medical team are important.

Pregnancy

Dental care is important during pregnancy, and necessary preventive and restorative treatment can generally be provided safely. Hormonal changes can increase gum inflammation, and frequent vomiting can expose teeth to acid. After vomiting, rinse with water or a baking-soda-and-water solution and wait before brushing so softened enamel is not scrubbed immediately.

Medications and supplements

Prescription medicines, over-the-counter products, and herbal supplements can affect bleeding, healing, saliva, blood pressure, sedation, and medication interactions. Natural products can also have side effects and contraindications, so please include them on your health history.

Please update us

Even a medication that seems unrelated to dentistry may change how we plan anesthesia, surgery, pain control, or preventive care.

5 Breathing, sleep, and airway

What to do if you notice possible airway concerns

Breathing and sleep affect growth, healing, attention, mood, and overall well-being. Dentists are in a useful position to notice oral and facial signs that may suggest an airway or sleep concern. Screening does not diagnose a sleep disorder, but it can help determine whether further evaluation would be useful.

Possible signs in children	Possible signs in adults
Mouth breathing or open-mouth posture	Snoring or witnessed pauses
Snoring, noisy breathing, or pauses	Waking unrefreshed
Restless sleep or unusual sleep positions	Morning headaches or dry mouth
Bedwetting beyond the expected age	Daytime fatigue
Grinding or clenching	Clenching, grinding, or jaw soreness
Crowding, narrow arches, or crossbite	Chronic mouth breathing or nasal obstruction
Daytime sleepiness, irritability, or difficulty focusing	Difficulty concentrating

If you notice these signs

- Tell us what you have observed, including changes in sleep, breathing, behavior, or energy.
- Bring a short video of snoring or unusual sleep breathing if you have one.
- We can perform an airway-focused dental screening and review appropriate next steps.
- When indicated, we may recommend evaluation by a physician, sleep specialist, ENT, allergist, or myofunctional therapist.

A team approach

Dental treatment may support airway health, but medical diagnosis and management remain an important part of complete care.

6 Supporting healthy childhood development

Breathing, oral function, growth, and tooth position are connected

A child's jaws, dental arches, tongue posture, breathing pattern, and oral habits develop together. Early screening can help identify concerns while growth is still occurring and may allow for more options.

What we may evaluate

Structure	Function
Dental crowding or spacing	Nasal versus mouth breathing
Narrow arches or crossbite	Tongue resting posture
Overbite or overjet	Swallowing pattern
Palate shape	Lip seal
Tonsil or adenoid concerns reported by the family	Chewing, speech, sleep, and oral habits

Possible next steps

Depending on the child's age and findings, recommendations may include monitoring growth, supporting nasal breathing, myofunctional therapy, evaluation of a tongue or lip restriction, orthodontic or orthopedic guidance, HealthyStart appliances, or referral to a medical provider.

HealthyStart uses a series of removable oral appliances intended to support dental alignment, arch development, and nighttime function in selected children. It is not appropriate for every child, and outcomes depend on diagnosis, growth, wear, and follow-through.

Early does not mean urgent

Screening gives families information. We will explain what we see, what can be monitored, and when treatment or referral may be worthwhile.

7 Dental materials and restorations

Repairing teeth thoughtfully and conservatively

When a tooth needs repair, the best material depends on the size and location of the damage, bite forces, moisture control, appearance, remaining tooth structure, health history, and personal preferences.

Common options

Tooth-colored fillings

- Useful for many small-to-moderate restorations
- Bonded directly to the tooth
- Designed to preserve healthy tooth structure
- Material selection is based on the clinical situation

Crowns and indirect restorations

- Used when a tooth needs greater coverage or strength
- May be ceramic or another selected material
- Often require a temporary restoration while the final one is made
- Bite, function, and longevity guide the recommendation

Your preferences belong in the conversation

Please tell us about material sensitivities, prior reactions, esthetic goals, concerns about fluoride or BPA, metal preferences, or questions about biocompatibility. No restorative material is perfect for every situation, so we will discuss reasonable choices and tradeoffs.

Preserve when possible

Our goal is to remove disease, protect the tooth, and retain as much sound tooth structure as the situation safely allows.

8 Mercury amalgam and SMART removal

Protective measures for patients and the dental team

Dental amalgam contains a mixture of metals that includes mercury. Some patients choose to retain and monitor stable amalgam restorations; others wish to replace them because of damage, recurrent decay, fracture, symptoms, or personal health preferences.

Removing an amalgam restoration temporarily increases exposure to mercury vapor and particles. Frenchtown Dental follows the IAOMT Safe Mercury Amalgam Removal Technique (SMART) to reduce exposure during removal.

SMART precautions may include

Patient protection	Environmental protection
Protective draping	High-volume air filtration near the treatment area
A non-latex dental dam	Protective equipment for the dental team
A separate source of breathing air	Removal of amalgam in larger pieces when possible
High-volume suction above and below the dam	Careful room cleaning and mercury-specific procedures
Thorough rinsing after removal	

Before deciding

We will evaluate the condition of each restoration, the health of the tooth, your goals, and the expected benefits and risks of replacement. Removal is not automatically recommended simply because an amalgam filling is present.

Planning matters

If you are medically complex, pregnant, highly sensitive, or working with another healthcare provider, tell us before scheduling amalgam removal.

9 Ozone and supportive therapies

Additional tools used selectively

Ozone is a highly reactive form of oxygen used in some dental settings for its antimicrobial effects. At Frenchtown Dental, ozone may be considered as an adjunct to other care—not as a substitute for removing decay, treating active infection, restoring a damaged tooth, or obtaining medical care when needed.

Where ozone may be discussed

- As part of selected periodontal, restorative, surgical, or infection-control protocols
- To support disinfection in a localized area
- As a conservative option in selected areas of concern identified clinically and, when appropriate, on 3-D imaging

Jawbone areas sometimes called cavitations

The term cavitation is sometimes used for an area of jawbone thought to have incomplete healing or reduced blood flow after an extraction, infection, or trauma. Definitions and diagnostic standards vary, and high-quality evidence about how often these areas occur and how best to treat them remains limited.

When persistent symptoms and imaging findings appear to correspond, we first consider common explanations such as infection, nerve irritation, sinus involvement, or another dental source. Conservative ozone therapy may be discussed in selected cases, together with uncertainty, alternatives, and follow-up.

Clear limits

Ozone should not be inhaled and is delivered with controlled techniques. It is not appropriate for every patient or every condition.

10 Partnering in your care

The best plan is one you understand and can carry forward

Before and during your visits

- Complete your health history carefully, including prescriptions, supplements, allergies, and previous reactions.
- Tell us what matters most to you: comfort, prevention, materials, appearance, function, airway, cost, timing, or another concern.
- Let us know about dental anxiety, sensory needs, jaw limitations, or past experiences that could help us care for you better.
- Ask us to slow down or explain something differently whenever needed.

After your visit

- Follow the individualized home-care and treatment instructions you receive.
- Contact us if symptoms are severe, worsening, unexpected, or simply concerning to you.
- Keep preventive visits so we can monitor changes and adjust your plan.
- Use the detailed condition- or procedure-specific handouts we provide when they apply to your care.

You remain in control

Our job is to give you clear information and professional guidance. Your questions, preferences, and consent remain central throughout your care.

Questions? We are happy to talk with you.

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This guide provides general education and does not replace individualized diagnosis or treatment recommendations.