

## MEET OUR 'OFFICE MOM'

### REEMA INSPIRES OUR PATIENTS AND TEAM TO LIVE BETTER

*When I hired Reema Patel almost 14 years ago, I had no idea I was hiring a mom for the whole office. Reema is one of the most supportive, encouraging, nurturing people I've ever met. If you've been her patient, you know exactly what I mean! She's also an extremely smart registered dental hygienist (RDH), office manager, and health coach — and the only one who can get me to put away my ice cream when I'm craving it.*

*Like me, Reema is fascinated by holistic health and how dentistry is connected to the whole body. She believes in treating the entire person and really understands how to coordinate complex dental care. I love working with Reema every day, and it has been a pleasure to watch her son Aaryan grow up from a cute little 2-year-old to the 16-year-old young man he is now.*

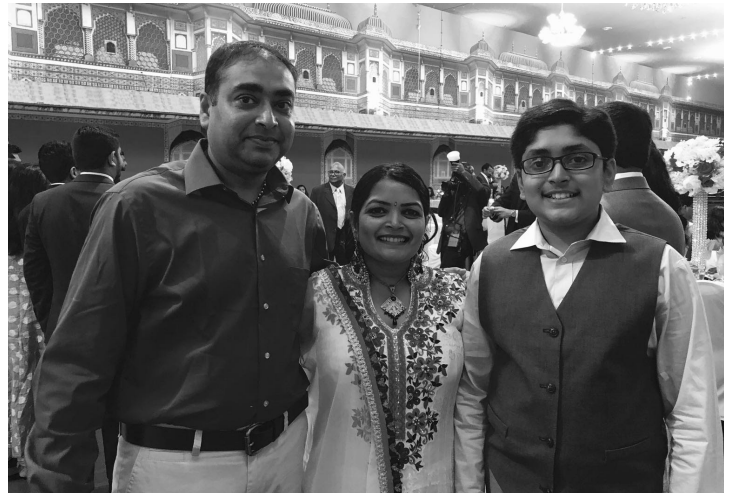
*To kick off the new year, I've invited Reema to share a bit about herself in this newsletter! Over the next few months, you'll hear from the rest of our team and really get to know the people who take care of you and your teeth.*

*—Dr. Michelle Weddle*

What an introduction! Like Dr. Weddle said, I've been a dental hygienist for 14 years and also the office manager for one year. When a patient has a concern, I'm the one they come to first before we call in Dr. Weddle. You might know me from treating your teeth or just saying "Hi" from behind the desk at the office.

Believe it or not, I didn't always want to be a dental hygienist. When I started my college career I planned to be a pharmacist. I only had one semester of prerequisites left when I visited the dentist — a family friend — to have a cavity filled. She introduced me to dentistry, and it didn't take long for me to change my whole life plan.

Years after starting my career, I became ill with an autoimmune disease. That experience triggered my interest in holistic health and healing the body with food, water,



sleep, exercise, love, stress release, and environmental change instead of medication. I became a certified health coach and started my own business, Wellness & Nutrition Spirit, on the side to help people feel better and lose weight. You can find my business on Facebook if you'd like to learn how to heal beyond your teeth! It's amazing how much your dental health and your overall health connect.

When I'm not at the Great Smiles office, you can probably find me seeing Wellness & Nutrition Spirit patients, cooking dinner for the family (Aaryan and my husband, Kushal, do the dishes), or sketching. My dad was an art teacher and passed on a love of drawing to me. I enjoy sketching pretty much everything except people — faces are the worst! I can design a whole room on paper, but when I try to put a person into it something always goes wonky. Fortunately, there are plenty of other things to draw in the world.

I hope this short note helps you understand me a bit better. If there's anything else you want to know, just ask next time you come in for a checkup!

To your great smiles and better health,

*—Reema Patel, RDH, CNWH*

# 3 BENEFITS OF STRETCHING

We've all been advised to stretch before working out or performing physical activities. However, some recent studies have cautioned against this practice, claiming it may lead to an increased chance of getting injured. Regardless, this does not mean you should cut stretching out of your life completely.

Stretching is not just for athletes. Everyone can benefit from this practice, and there are many advantages that come with improving your flexibility. Getting in the habit of stretching after you wake up and before you go to bed can benefit many aspects of your overall health.

Here are our top three benefits!

## **Reduced Risk of Injury**

If your muscles are tight and you start working out, your chance of injury increases. Stretching helps to loosen your muscles and allows them to move easier. This still does not mean you should stretch right before working out, but by creating a routine where you stretch in the morning or

at night (or both!), your muscles will stay looser, helping prevent muscle strains and tears.

## **Improved Balance and Posture**

Strong posture and balance are essential for both everyday activities and athletic performance. Good posture is necessary for spine health, and you need good balance to do everything from walking down the street to standing and sitting. The flexibility gained through stretching improves the muscles that are needed for correct posture, and you will also increase your range of motion.

## **Relaxation and Reduced Pain**

There are also certain stretches that help lengthen and open your muscles. When your muscles are looser and relaxed, you're less likely to feel pain or experience muscle cramps. Stretching can work wonders for people suffering from lower back pain. This pain is often caused by tight muscles, and stretching will loosen them and relieve that pain. Stretching can also help your mind loosen up and unwind, which will relieve stress and improve your mood.

## *GIVE YOUR BONES A BOOST*

Approximately 55% of the population over 50 will be affected by osteoporosis, which thins and weakens the bones. In the U.S. alone, the condition is responsible for about 1.5 million fractures per year. You may not think exercise can help with bone loss, but prepare to be surprised. A comprehensive physical therapy plan can not only promote bone growth but also improve balance and posture, which lowers the risk of falling or sustaining fractures.

Bone is living tissue. Just as with other parts of our bodies, cells are constantly dying and being replaced. With osteoporosis, not enough new bone is created to make up for the bone lost, so it becomes weak and brittle. Women and older people are especially prone to osteoporosis, but an inactive lifestyle, smoking, excessive alcohol, or low weight can also contribute to development of the condition.

Often, people with osteoporosis don't experience symptoms. That sounds like a good thing, but unfortunately, it results in the condition not being diagnosed until after a broken or fractured bone. Telltale signs of the condition include a loss of height, pain between the shoulder blades, or pain above

## **HOW PT CAN HELP WITH OSTEOPOROSIS**

the pelvis. But frequently, the first indication of a problem is when a bone breaks during normal activity, such as receiving a hug or stepping off a curb.

A physical therapist's treatment of osteoporosis depends on each patient's unique situation. Just like muscles become stronger from exercise, so do bones. Most physical therapy regimens will involve specific exercises to help build bone mass.

To avoid falling or injury, physical therapists will also work with patients to improve balance, correct posture, and adapt to daily activities while protecting their bone health. If the bone is still fractured, a physical therapist can also help relieve pain without medication through positioning and other techniques.

If you've been diagnosed with osteoporosis, contact a physical therapist today to help regain your strength and quality of life. A customized physical therapy plan can help you get back to safely doing the things you love — no bones about it.

# HAPPY NEW YEAR!

## *We're Greeting It With Big Smiles*

Our team is back in the office and ready to tackle the new year. This holiday season we enjoyed the best gifts of all: good health and time with family. Hopefully, you did the same!

We can't wait to help you recommit to your well-being in 2022. We'll be there as you kick your bad habits and start new ones that will serve you better — all with big smiles on our faces!

After two years of masks and face shields, you might have forgotten what those faces look like.

### Here Are the Smiles Behind Our Masks!



**Beatriz**  
*Registered Dental Assistant, Orthodontic Assistant, Sleep and TMJ Assistant*



**Jennifer**  
*Hygienist and Dental Sleep Medicine Coordinator*



**Dr. Michelle Weddle**



**Reema**  
*Office Manager, Dental Hygienist, Certified Health Coach*



**Stephanie**  
*Radiology Tech, Dental Assistant, Sleep and TMJ Assistant*

Thank you for choosing us as your dental team for 2022!  
Turn the page to find out what we're doing to keep you safe this year.





# HERE'S HOW WE'RE PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY

The health and safety of our patients and our team is very important.

## **To keep everyone safe, we are still:**

- Following all state, national, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines
- Checking patient temperatures
- Asking screening questions
- Encouraging all patients to wash their hands or disinfect with antimicrobial sanitizer
- Providing all patients with a mouthwash pre-rinse to sanitize their mouths
- Wearing high-end personal protective equipment, including masks, lab coats/surgical gowns, and gloves
- Using extraoral vacuum technology with five layers of filtration to clear the air of sprays, aerosols, bacteria, viruses, and more
- Providing surgically clean air with filters that turn over the air in our treatment rooms *at least* every 4-6 minutes
- Going above and beyond to maintain a fully sterilized, disinfected environment

We're also learning all we can about the coronavirus and how to prevent it. During our research, we have found many things we can do to help improve our immune system and keep us healthy.

## **Here are five ways YOU can boost your immunity and protect yourself and your family from the virus, according to the experts:**

1. Gargle with antiseptic mouthwash twice a day to scrub out pathogens. (Scope, Act, and Crest are great options.)
2. Use Xlear Nasal Spray daily to clean pathogens from your nose.
3. Take immune-fortifying supplements including vitamin D3, vitamin C, quercetin, zinc, and melatonin. (Talk to your doctor about the right doses for you.)
4. Wash your hands before eating or touching your face.
5. Wear a mask.

If we're all vigilant, we can keep ourselves and the people we love safe and healthy.



# 3 Things to Include in Your Post-Workout Meal

There's plenty of emphasis lately on what you should eat before a workout, but not so much about after a workout. What you eat after exercising is just as essential for maximizing your workout's effectiveness. After intensive exercise, many of us will feel hungry and turn to just about anything to satiate our hunger, but the wrong food could negate the effects of our workouts.

During your workout, you will use up your body's carbohydrates and the glucose stored in your muscles. A proper post-workout meal, including the right fluids, is necessary to replenish these nutrients. When preparing the perfect post-workout meal, there are three areas you should focus on.

## Protein

Including protein in your post-workout meal is important to repair and build muscle. Muscle tissues get broken down during exercise, and protein helps put

them back together stronger than before. Eggs, tuna, chicken, and Greek yogurt are great sources of protein and should be implemented into your post-workout meal.

## Carbs

Carbs are essential for replenishing your body's glycogen levels. Glycogen is the fuel that helps keep us moving and active. If you feel exhausted and hungry after a workout, it's usually your body telling you that your glycogen levels are low. Including carbs such as sweet potatoes, rice, oatmeal, pasta, and chocolate milk in your post-workout meal will help you feel energized and ready to continue with your day.

## Fluids

You should always drink water while working out and continue to do so after your exercise is complete. Water regulates your body temperature, lubricates your joints, and transports nutrients throughout your body. In one hour of exercise, your body can lose more than a quarter of its water. Continue to drink water or other hydrating drinks after your workout to replenish your missing fluids.

Lastly, avoid having a giant fast-food meal after exercising. There are plenty of options for preparing a truly beneficial post-workout meal, so find what makes you feel your best and what you enjoy most and run with it.



TAKE A  
BREAK!



BLACK BEAN,  
MANGO, AND  
AVOCADO  
SALAD

Inspired by BBCGoodFood.com

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 small mango, skinned and chopped
- 1 avocado, chopped
- 3/4 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 red chile, seeded and chopped
- 1 medium red onion, chopped
- 2 cans black beans, drained
- Cilantro, chopped and to taste
- 1 lime, for zest and juicing

## DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl, mix the ingredients together. Serve and enjoy!

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BLACK BEAN, MANGO, AND AVOCADO SALAD
4. 3 WARNING SIGNS YOU SHOULD STOP EXERCISING NOW!

## 3 WARNING SIGNS *YOU SHOULD STOP EXERCISING NOW!*

As we enter 2022, many people are putting their New Year's resolutions into place. Getting in shape and going to the gym on a regular basis are popular goals every year. But we all know getting in shape is much easier said than done. We need determination and an extensive routine to meet the fitness goals we set up at the beginning of the year.

For many people, exercising is not part of their daily routine, and their workouts in the beginning can be too intense. Not only will this potentially lead to gym burnout, but it can also bring on a slew of health issues. If you start noticing any of the following signs, you should stop your workout immediately.

### **Muscle/Joint Pain**

Soreness is normal when working out, especially in the early days of developing a workout routine, but the soreness should never turn into pain. If you start to feel a sharp pain or swelling in a specific part of your body, stop exercising immediately. This may mean you are doing the exercise wrong, but it could also reveal a deeper problem, including injury. If you start to

experience pain, stop working that muscle or joint. If the pain does not subside after your workout, seek a doctor's advice.

### **Shortness of Breath**

When doing cardio, endurance training, or any form of intense exercise, you may feel shortness of breath. If you do, take a break until you can catch your breath. Your breathing should return to normal shortly after you stop exercising, but if it doesn't or you find yourself gasping for air at any point, stop your workout. This could be a sign of a respiratory or heart problem.

### **Chest Pain**

Chest pain is possibly the most severe warning sign you could experience while working out. It might mean you have an underlying heart condition. If you experience chest pain while exercising, stop immediately. The best way to avoid this issue is to see a doctor before you begin an exercise routine. They can inform you of any health conditions you may have that could impede your workout.

