



Happy OCTOBER from Sandia View Family Dental!

"I am so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers."

- Lucy Maud Montgomery

The weather has been **so beautiful** here in New Mexico. The last few days Dr. Chris and I have been taking walks in the morning and the evenings, and it has been perfect outside.

We're sharing a photo of our entire family at Balloon Fiesta this year. This doesn't always happen, but at the last minute we were able to go. It was such a beautiful morning.

We have a lot to share this month, so make sure you read through it all!



Our Family at Balloon Fiesta 2025

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DR. CHRIS'S CORNER

What's up Sandia View Family!

Last week I took some time away from the office to focus on my mental and physical health. I was experiencing anxiety that became debilitating and overwhelming—and I knew I needed to address what was going on. I cancelled shifts, which I almost never do, and was reminded that it's important to slow down, seek support, and take care of yourself. During my time away from the office, I worked on mindfulness through meditation, breath work, and sound healing, spent time in nature, and spoke with my doctors to get back on track. Why am I sharing all this?

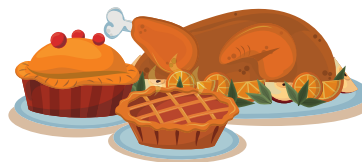
October is Mental Health Awareness Month, and I want to remind anyone who might be struggling that you're not alone. Taking care of your mind is just as vital as taking care of your body. It's okay to step away, ask for help, and give yourself the space to heal. Sometimes the most courageous thing you can do—for yourself and the people who depend on you—is to take that first step toward rest and renewal.

– Dr. Chris Christensen

BOO-tiful smiles are better when shared! Refer a friend!



October Referral Program



Win a \$75 Grocery Gift Card!

Do you know someone who's looking for a new dentist? A referral is the highest compliment we can receive—and we'd be honored to care for your friends and family.

This month when you refer a new patient to Sandia View Family Dental, when they book their first appointment you will be entered to win a \$75 Grocery Gift Card to help kickstart your Thanksgiving celebration!

Make sure the patient mentions your name when they schedule their first appointment so we know it came from you! Thank you for trusting us with the people who matter most to you. It is truly an honor.



One of the Most Important Moments in a Dental Exam

If you've ever wondered why Dr. Chris asks you to "stick out your tongue," it's not just for fun — it's an important part of your dental exam.

During every comprehensive exam, Dr. Chris carefully checks your tongue, cheeks, gums, lips, and throat for any unusual spots, lumps, or changes that could indicate early signs of oral cancer. Recently, he's detected areas of concern in a few patients that — after biopsy — were confirmed to be oral cancer. Thankfully, because they were caught early, treatment could begin right away.

Oral cancer can affect anyone, even those who don't smoke or drink, and early detection truly saves lives. That's why these screenings are built into your routine visits at Sandia View Family Dental.

If you ever notice a sore, lump, or patch in your mouth that doesn't heal within two weeks, please don't ignore it — schedule an appointment. Your health is always our top priority.

P.S. Check out the infographic on the right to learn more!



Staff Spotlight: Ashley Rael, Administrative & Billing Specialist



If you've ever had a question about your dental insurance or billing, chances are you've met Ashley, one of the friendly faces who keeps things running smoothly at Sandia View Family Dental!

Born and raised in Santa Fe, Ashley has been part of the dental world since 2008, when she earned her Certified Dental Assistant license from CNM. With more than 14 years of experience in billing and insurance, she's passionate about helping patients understand their coverage and making every visit as stress-free as possible.

When she's not at the office, Ashley stays busy with her three kids, enjoying camping trips, family time, and cheering on her favorite hockey team. We're so grateful to have Ashley on our team — her dedication and kindness make a real difference every day!

The Word of Mouth on ORAL CANCER

DIAGNOSIS & SURVIVAL



450,000
new cases of
oral cancer each
year worldwide



In the US, more than
43,000
people were
diagnosed with
oral cancer in 2014



In the U.S.,
a person dies from
oral cancer every
hour of every day



More than
40%
of those diagnosed
with oral cancer die
within five years

EARLY DIAGNOSIS
CAN DOUBLE A PATIENT'S
CHANCES OF SURVIVAL TO

40%
DOUBLED TO

80%–90%

RISK FACTORS FOR ORAL CANCER

WHAT RAISES YOUR RISK FOR ORAL CANCER?



Tobacco use:
No amount is safe;
risk increases with use



Alcohol use:
7+ drinks
per week 14+ drinks
per week



**Exposure to the
HPV-16 virus**



The risk is
15X greater
for people who both
smoke & drink

MORE EDUCATION & PREVENTION IS NEEDED



68% of US consumers know little,
or nothing at all about oral cancer



34% of consumers are not
aware that HPV is a risk
factor for oral cancer



LESS THAN 24% OF CONSUMERS SAY
that their dentist spoke with them
about risk factors for oral cancer
at their last dental check-up

Only 36% of consumers reported that they were screened
for oral cancer at their last dental check-up

More than
81% of consumers
would like to be screened
for oral cancer at every
dental check up

More than
78% of consumers
want their dentist to help them
learn ways to reduce their risk
of getting oral cancer

VIGILANTBIOSCIENCES
Fighting Cancer Every Step of the Way

Data Source:
Diagnosis and Survival: Oral Cancer Foundation
Risk Factors for Oral Cancer: Oral Cancer Foundation and National Cancer Institute
More Education and Prevention is Needed: Vigilant Biosciences' 2018 Oral Cancer
Awareness Consumer Survey, conducted March 16-26, with 1050 consumers ages 35-75.