

# Dental *focus*

## Holistic dentistry for total health

*What do car batteries and metal fillings, inlays, onlays, and crowns have in common?  
They all produce electrical currents.*

## Electric Currents in Your Mouth: Oral Galvanism

In last month's newsletter, we mentioned that Dr. Garcia uses ceramic dental materials in her practice, because ionized metals can cause galvanic activity, metal toxicity, inflammation, and autoimmune disease. Let's delve a little further into that, shall we?

You have probably never compared your teeth to car batteries, or thought of "electrical currents" as a side effect to dental treatments. But when you get a ionized metal filling, inlay, onlay, crown, or implant, you have all the ingredients you need to create a charged battery in your mouth!

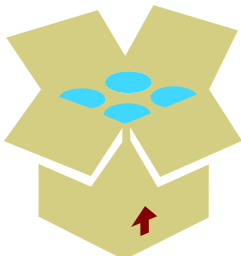
A battery simply requires two or more different metals sitting in a liquid that can conduct electricity (i.e., an electrolyte). Your saliva acts as the electrolyte, and the metal restorations provide the dissimilar metals, even if you only have one metal filling or crown.

Pure metals are almost never used in dentistry, because the physical characteristics are inappropriate. Instead, metal fillings, crowns, and implants are made up of alloys (metal blends), and they can contain any combination of

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## We're moving...but staying in the neighborhood!



Yes, it's true! Since opening our doors in 2002, we have added hundreds of new patients to our family. We've simply outgrown our current office, and the time has come for a move!

We hope to be settled into our new home by the end of the year. It will be located just a few miles from our current office, at 33 W. Higgins Rd., South Barrington. We'll be right across from Dr. Mercola's Natural Health Center. We will be sure keep you updated on our progress!

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## Use It or Lose It!

As a friendly reminder, the end of the year is approaching fast. Many of our patients have unutilized dental benefits, which could be going toward their needed dental treatment. If you are paying your dental insurance premiums every month, why not put those benefits to good use?

As you know, if the benefits for the current year are not used they will be LOST. Most insurance plans allow a certain dollar amount per calendar year. If you have considerable dental needs, you can split your treatment plan between the current year and the beginning of next year. It's also an opportunity to fit in that regular cleaning, which helps prevent and detect any early signs of cavities, gum disease, oral cancer and other dental problems. Remember, if you don't use it, you lose it!

Please call us at (847) 985-0400 with any questions regarding your treatment or to schedule your next appointment. Our staff will be happy to help!



## Giving Thanks

Thank you all for being such loyal patients for the past 20 years! We look forward to caring for your teeth and overall wellness for years to come!

## From Our Kitchen to Yours...

Gwen Kic, our New Patient Coordinator, does a wonderful job explaining our holistic practice to our new dental patients. This month, she would like to share with you a favorite fall recipe. Her raw almond butter—which is a great source of protein and essential fats—tastes heavenly on fresh fall apples or celery.

### Raw Almond Butter

2 1/2 c. raw almonds  
1/2 c. + 1 T. olive oil  
1 tsp. sea salt  
2-3 T. organic maple syrup, to taste

Blend almonds in food processor until finely chopped. While food processor is running, slowly add oil until desired consistency is reached. Add salt and maple syrup last, or your almond butter will become gummy). Transfer to a tightly-sealed glass jar and store in refrigerator. Makes about one pint.

## Oral Galvanism: Corrosion, Metallic Taste, and Unexplained Pain

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metals, depending on the manufacturer. A “classic” gold crown, for example, is likely made up of things like gold, platinum, palladium, silver, copper, and tin. And mercury-amalgam (“silver”) fillings contain mercury, copper, tin, silver and zinc.

An electric current, called a “galvanic” current, is generated by the transportation of metal ions from the dental metals into your saliva. This phenomenon is called “oral galvanism,” and it literally means that your mouth is acting like a small car battery or a miniature electrical generator. The currents can actually be measured using an ammeter, which is used to measure the electric current in a circuit!

Oral galvanism creates three major complications. First, the electric currents increase the rate of corrosion (or dissolution) of

metal-based dental restorations and replacements. Even “precious” metal alloys such as gold and platinum continuously release metal ions into the mouth due to corrosion, a process that gnaws away bits of metal from the metal's surface. These ions react with other components of the

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***Don't be fooled by your “porcelain” crown into thinking your mouth is metal-free. You probably have a porcelain-fused-to-metal crown.***

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body, leading to sensitivity, inflammation, and, ultimately, autoimmune disease. Increasing the corrosion rate, therefore, increases the chance of developing immunologic or toxic reactions to the metals. (Stay tuned for our next newsletter, which will talk more about these effects!)

Second, some individuals are very sensitive to these internal electrical currents. Oral galvanism can result in local lesions, nerve shocks, a metallic or salty taste, burning tongue, unexplained pain, and discoloration.

Finally, there is the concern that oral galvanism directs electrical currents into brain tissue and can disrupt the natural electrical current in the brain.

There are hundreds of different metallic alloys to choose from when making dental restorations, and each company has its own formula for each item. It is therefore difficult to be one hundred percent sure of the composition of your fillings, crowns, partial dentures, and implants. So why take the risk of suffering these side effects when we can offer ceramic alternatives?

The best compliment our patients can give us is a referral of their friends and family. ~ Dr. Garcia & Staff