

Dental health has a profound effect on heart

Chances are, you know that heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. And whether or not you choose to incorporate preventative measures into your lifestyle, you also know that diet, exercise, not smoking, reducing your stress levels, and more can reduce your risk of experiencing heart disease.

What you probably don't realize is that brushing your teeth, flossing, and seeing your dentist regularly can also have a profound effect on your coronary health.

"Understandably, you might be surprised by—and somewhat skeptical about—this information," says Thomas E. Levy, MD, JD, coauthor along with Robert Kulacz, DDS, of "The Toxic Tooth: How a root canal could be making you sick."

"It's natural to assume that the work of your dentist and your cardiologist would never have a reason to overlap. But more and more, scientific research is confirming that dental disease is a definitive risk factor for cardiovascular disease."

Dr. Kulacz explains the link between dental health and heart health: "There are numerous sources of oral infection, including gum disease (periodontitis) and tooth decay. Even root canal-treated teeth, which are assumed to be "safe," remain infected even after the root canal procedure is performed.

"But whatever the source, the bacteria and toxins from oral infections eventually spread throughout the body via the bloodstream and proliferate at distant sites such as the coronary arteries," he said. "Over time, they cause tissue damage, disrupt cellular function, and drain the body's antioxidant stores. The inflammation caused by oral disease can also initiate or worsen systemic diseases like heart disease."

Consider the following:

- Current research suggests that 50 percent of heart attacks may be triggered by an infection in the mouth.
- Increasingly, heart surgeons are ordering an oral

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SPRD offers wilderness first aid course

Sisters Park & Recreation District (SPRD) is set to host a Wilderness First Aid (WFA) course Saturday and Sunday, May 2 and 3 at the Coffield Center (SPRD facility at the west end of the Sisters High School parking lot).

Presented by the Wilderness Medicine Institute (WMI), this course will cover the basics of how to perform first aid to anyone in the outdoors and more advanced topics such as dislocation reduction and epinephrine administration. The Wilderness Medicine Institute is a nationally renowned medical education provider. Participants in the program can receive college credit upon completing the class.

According to SPRD Program Assistant Kelly Crowther, "It's great to be able to offer a program from WMI to our community. They really are the leaders in outdoor medicine and will benefit the outdoor-minded Sisters community."

Primarily designed for those frequenting the outdoors, the WFA course is ideal for outdoor leaders. Sisters High School IEE Interns have used this course to become

certified to prepare themselves for leading groups in the outdoors. Many outdoor professionals such as raft and ski guides, wildland firefighters, trip leaders, and camp counselors also utilize this class as part of employee-required training. Additionally, the course can be advantageous for those who want to be prepared for emergency situations in the outdoors with friends.

Participants in the class should expect both indoor and outdoor learning environments. While indoors, participants will learn how to assess a patient, treat spine and head injuries, heat and cold injuries, lightning injuries, anaphylaxis, the basics of wound management, and altitude sickness. Outdoor scenarios will be incorporated into the class to give students a hands-on learning experience. To add to the realism of



PHOTO PROVIDED

Learn to deal with the bumps and bruises — and worse — of backcountry adventure.

the scenarios, moulage (stage blood) is used and students are asked to dress wounds and perform CPR on mannequins.

The cost of the course is \$200 which, according to SPRD, is the lowest price course in the Central Oregon area. Registrations are being taken at SPRD by calling 541-549-2091 and at www.sistersrecreation.com.

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Dr. Hapke does bodywork that includes massage using flower essences. These can help balance out your emotional state — much like essential oils, but they're OK for the scent-sensitive.

This kind of bodywork can establish or re-establish your mind-body connection and your body awareness, so you are better able to understand the impact of stress both on your emotions and on your



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SPRD

Sisters Park & Recreation District (SPRD) increasingly caters to a broad demographic — including older citizens.

Shannon Rackowski teaches several exercise classes for seniors that are specifically geared to meet their needs, such as improving balance and connecting cognitive exercise with movement. Shannon also leads excursions for seniors to local destinations. For many seniors who either do not drive or limit their driving, these excursions open up Central Oregon for them to explore. The excursions have included trips to Faith, Hope and Charity Vineyards; The High Desert Museum; and an excursion to view Christmas lights at Eagle Crest.

SPRD opens its facility each Wednesday from 1 to 4 p.m. for senior activities through SAGE



(Senior Activities, Gatherings & Experiences). The group offers activities ranging from board-games to crafts. SPRD's senior programs include: Stretch & Flex; Walk with Ease; Indoor Walking; Dancing to the Oldies; Pickle Ball; Seniors Self-Defense and more.