

Jonathan Peterson

PERIODONTICS

Dental School: Temple University, Kornberg School of Dentistry
Years in Practice: 11



What drew you to periodontics? Are the gums simply more interesting than the teeth?

I was drawn to the connection between the health of the mouth and the body. Periodontal disease can cause a myriad of other diseases in the body. When I treat a patient with periodontal disease, I'm not just helping them get new teeth and a beautiful smile, I am giving them back their health.

What are the "easiest" periodontal procedures, and which are the most challenging? Tissue grafts would seem to fall in the latter category...

Any case can be more complex than another, depending on the biology and anatomy of the patient. Years ago, when I started placing my first dental implants, I thought they might be challenging, but once you understand the mechanics of the implant and the anatomy of the body, it's really a beautiful thing.

You were born and raised in Arizona. What do you love about the Grand Canyon State?

We love to be outdoors as a family. Living here, we can be outside every single day. In the winter, we love hiking in the desert or visiting the snow. In the spring and fall, we love to camp. In the summer, we enjoy swimming and barbecues.

What are your favorite local haunts?

I like seeking out ghost towns around our state, and enjoy learning about the history and people that lived there. Our family likes going out to Goldfield or Bumblebee, as long as we get ice cream at the end.

You're an Eagle Scout and love the outdoors. What are your favorite places to hike or camp in Arizona?

We enjoy camping around Forest Lakes as a family. We take our kayak, mountain bikes and fishing rods. Last summer we found a spot to pick wild raspberries.

Who is your favorite pop-culture dentist? (Hermey from *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*? Orin Scrivello from *Little Shop of Horrors*? etc.)

I'd have to say Tim Whatley from *Seinfeld*, played by Bryan Cranston.

If you could persuade all Americans to follow one bit of dental advice, what would it be?

Never underestimate the power of floss. It's as important as brushing.

What's the funniest thing a patient has said to you on nitrous oxide?

It's not appropriate to repeat in this magazine.

"If I wasn't a dentist, I'd be..."

A chef. If you come to my home, I will make you an amazing meal.

