

## **“Your Oral Health & Prosthodontics”**

**By: Dr. Dimitri Perdikis**

The pain was more than just a distraction now. It was constant and interfered with everything. I knew I had to go back to my dentist, but even the thought of calling their office was painful. It's the same thing everytime I call, the line is busy or I get the answering machine. I'm actually happy when I reach the rude person in the office, the one who makes me feel as though I intruded on her day. We'll set up an appointment. It will be much further away than I want it and it will be at an inconvenient time. If I complain, she'll quickly snip back, "the doctor's very busy and that's the soonest I can get you in."

I wondered, why is it that even though I go to the dentist every 6 months, I'm constantly going back to get one thing fixed after another? I need a better dentist! I ran into my girlfriend at the grocery store. When she asked what was wrong, I told her about my dental pain and my dread of calling my dentist. I explained how I never get an appointment when I need one, how procedures were often painful and how unfriendly the staff always felt. She quickly wrote down her dentist's name, Dr. Perdikis in West Hartford and said I had to call him. She told me he wasn't just a general dentist, he was a Prosthodontist, a specialist who has completed an additional three year advanced program in prosthodontics and implant dentistry. This extensive specialist training and experience gives him the added expertise to diagnose and treat the most complex dental problems. Not only that, she said I'd love him, he'll treat me like family.

I called Dr. Perdikis. My call was answered by a real person, a warm, friendly person. She was compassionate about my pain and said she would get me in

immediately. Right away, I knew things were going to be different.

This wonderful feeling continued as I walked through the door into the warm and comfortable reception area. I was greeted by a friendly person with a big smile. I took my seat in the reception area. Besides the current magazines, I noticed a wall of information on periodontal disease, crowns, implants, adult orthodontics and whitening. It was refreshing to see all this educational material. Then, I remembered, my girlfriend told me Dr. Perdikis is a Clinical Professor at the University of Connecticut. It makes sense that he keeps his patients educated on their options.

Within seconds, I saw a welcoming hand extended to me. Attached to it - a smiling doctor - Dr. Perdikis. He made eye contact and took the time to ask how I was feeling and what my concerns were. He did something very unusual, he actually listened to me. My old dentist didn't talk to me much and when he did, he talked down to me. He talked to his assistants. They showed him the x-rays and he "fixed" what he thought was wrong with me. And this went on until something else hurt or broke and I repeated the process. I found this routine very frustrating.

I explained my discomfort to Dr. Perdikis. He gave me my treatment options and we decided together which option was the best for me. I chose the option of immediate pain relief. I will return for a comprehensive exam. I never even heard of a comprehensive exam. Dr. Perdikis explained to me that a comprehensive exam includes a full series of x-rays periodontal charting (monitoring the overall health of my gums), an oral cancer exam, charting of my existing dental work including fillings, crowns, and other dental work and a diagnosis of current status.

Be sure to read the article in the next issue of The Hartford Women's Journal and I'll tell you more about my next visit.