

# Living Well.

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## A holistic approach to teeth and gums

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Looking up at the bright light and down at the scary, pointed tools at the dentist's office gives the impression that it's all about cleaning up and shining the smile.

But there's a lot more going on in the mouth, and a lot more at stake than tooth and gum.

Most dentists agree that things like gum disease and cavities cause other health concerns, some as serious as heart disease, diabetes and possibly even cancer if left unchecked.

Dr. David Satloff, in following that trend as a practicing holistic dentist for more than 20 years, treats the teeth, gums and general

wellbeing. Satloff recently brought up some topics in dentistry of interest to the health-conscience.

"The mouth is part of the overall body," Satloff said. "It can infect the rest of the body."

Satloff, who has studied alternative practices in China, as well as acupuncture and quantum healing, spent two years in the Peace Corps after graduating from Tufts University in 1981. He was the first dentist in the country in 1990 to become board certified in pain management. He's also trained in neuromuscular dentistry and temporo-mandibular disorders. He is on the editorial board of advisors for the Journal of Pain Management and is in his last semester of law school at Concord University.

While all of that sounds very formal, Satloff has been using alternative techniques, like removing energy blockages, testing for heavy metal sensitivity and assessing a patient's energy flow to cure a variety of ills.

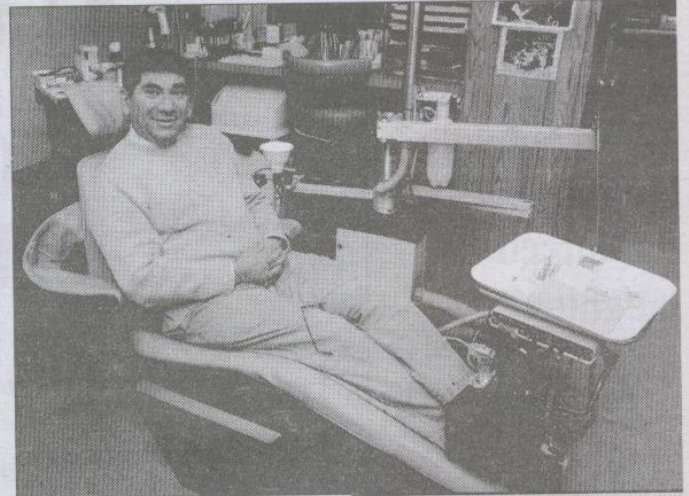
"It's what you learn outside (school)," he said.

Satloff practices one day a week at his office at 1118 County St. and the rest of the time in Attleboro.

Patients who typically schedule appointments to have mercury fillings removed can find out if they are allergic to other dental restorations, which might leech into the body.

While Satloff hasn't used mercury fillings for 20 years, he said they are a known toxin, but remain legal in the United States. Half of all dentists still use mercury-based restorations in their practice, Satloff said. The use of mercury in dental offices was recently banned in Sweden and Norway.

Consumers for Dental Choice, a non-profit organization, is



HERALD NEWS PHOTO  
DAVE SOUZA

Dr. David Satloff in his holistic dentistry office.

suing the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. They are asking the FDA to remove mercury fillings from the market.

Currently, they are "not required to go through the FDA process," Satloff said.

But mercury isn't the only culprit. Satloff said there are lots of metals used in amalgam fillings that can affect certain individuals with a particular sensitivity.

Low-toxic biocompatibility testing can determine what an individual's immune system can handle.

Chronic infection is another dental problem that can affect overall health. Satloff said studies show that bacteria from the mouth can cause heart disease.

"When you have infection in the mouth, it drains to the heart," Satloff said.

In his personal dental experience, Satloff said that every female patient he's had with systemic breast cancer (the kind that spreads) has also had unresolved infection in the lower back teeth.

In dentistry, Satloff said that

what you can't see "can still be there."

In fact, he said patients often have chronic infections they don't know about, such as in people who have had root canals. Infections, with no symptoms, can still be in the mouth.

"The key is to treat before the procedure," he said.

Something that you can see: bloody gums, a condition that affects many. Satloff said studies are now concluding that it can contribute to high cholesterol, blood sugar and C-reactive protein, which can indicate a future heart attack or stroke.

As far as pain in the mouth, head or neck, Satloff uses his Eastern practices to treat people with chronic symptoms by assessing a person's energy field and looking for blockages.

"It's for patients looking for answers outside of traditional care," Satloff said.

His practice, in fact, focuses on craniofacial pain, craniofacial orthopedics, facial aesthetics and cosmetic dentistry. Satloff recently attended a two-day session at the Cranio-Facial Aesthetics Institute at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine.

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