

Are you kissing that? C'mon guys, Step it Up!

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Did you know that men are less likely than women to take care of their physical health and, according to research; their oral health is equally ignored? Good oral health has been linked to longevity, yet one of the most common factors associated with infrequent dental checkups is just being male. Men are less likely than women to seek preventive dental care and often neglect their oral health for years, visiting a dentist only when a problem arises.

An online poll of 289 general dentists and consumers confirms the traditional stereotype that men are less likely to visit the dentist than their female counterparts, according to the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD). Why? Nearly 45 percent of respondents felt that men don't see a need to go to the dentist, and about 30 percent of those polled reported that men may not visit the dentist because they are afraid or embarrassed to go. Almost 18 percent revealed that men just don't have the time for a dental visit, and about 5 percent felt that men don't even have a regular dentist.

This long-standing trend may be disappearing as more men are climbing back into the dental chair – for a surprising reason.

Men are coming in and requesting bleaching, veneers and bonding. Many have noticed the positive effects from a colleague's improved smile and realize that a great smile has a lot of value in the business world. Today with lay-offs and company closings men are competing for jobs, making appearance a heightened factor in their lives.

Taking a back seat to cosmetic concerns for men is the increased awareness of the overall health benefits of seeing a dentist regularly.

I want men to come see me because they're concerned about their health, however I'm glad to be their advocate and oral health specialist whatever the reason for their return. Many times after men come back to the dentist, we expand upon their dental awareness and the connection of oral health to overall health. They realize that proper maintenance and routine checkups are a key component to improving the way one looks and feels, and if it brings your partner a little closer, that's another added benefit.

Learn how to create – and maintain – a very healthy mouth by calling 254-4000 for an appointment, or visiting www.drdell.com.