

DOCTOR *of* DENTISTRY

A BUSINESS AND LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE FOR DENTISTS



**The Multispecialty
Practice of Dr. George
Salem in Braintree, MA**

The Multispecialty Practice of Dr. George Salem (Dr. George Salem and Associates, P.C.) of Braintree, MA

Celebrating 20 Years of Excellence in Dentistry

By Renee Mildrum

Looking at the meticulously clean, state-of-the-art facility that Dr. George Salem and his associates now occupy, it's surprising how the practice began. On a cold and dreary day in January 1989, Dr. Salem opened his practice in a small, two-room dental office that he rented from one of his former dental school instructors. In those days, Dr. Salem was a true solo

practitioner with no assistants, hygienists or office managers. "When I began," recalls Dr. Salem, "I would answer the phone, check my patients in, perform the dental procedures, and then check them out. After the office closed, I would clean the office, restock the materials, sterilize the instruments and fill out the insurance forms by hand. I was so appreciative of the few patients

Dr. Salem (second from left) reviews a case with practice associates (from left), Dr. Jason Raney, orthodontist; Dr. Matthew Lann, periodontist; and Dr. Kenneth Plisner, oral and maxillofacial surgeon.



that I started with way back then. They referred so many patients that I needed to build a bigger office with four treatment rooms after six months. That is why I am still so honored by every new patient that my existing patients refer to me.”

Although Dr. Salem’s patients now number in the thousands, he remains humble and appreciative. “When a patient chooses me to be their dentist, they have trusted their oral health to me, my skills and my judgment. One’s health is perhaps their most important possession, and oral health in particular is vitally important to one’s sense of self-esteem, dignity and social confidence. So, I am not only honored when a patient places that responsibility in my hands, but I am also driven to preserve or enhance that sacred possession with all that I and modern dentistry have to offer.”

THE MULTI SPECIALTY EXPERIENCE

According to Dr. Salem, the multispecialty office design benefits his patients by providing the ideal combination of convenience, continuity of care and record keeping. It is now commonplace that a patient will require the services of two to three specialists for the best quality of care. This means that a patient must become familiar with several practice locations, several office staffs, several different office policies and hours of operation. Furthermore, each office will not have the ability to keep track of the patient’s insurance coverage and may not have any understanding of the patient’s insurance specifications. In contrast, with all of the specialists under one roof, and with orthodontic and periodontal services provided during evening and Saturday hours, respectively, patient convenience is optimized. Additionally, the communication and the sharing of important medical and dental information among various specialists at various locations can be very challenging. In Dr. Salem’s office, this information is located in one digital chart for all specialists within the practice to access whenever necessary.

HIGH TECHNOLOGY

The present facility consists of eight operatories and an impressive array of the most technologically advanced dental equipment. A digital radiograph and computerized charting system were installed in late 2008. “Digital radiographs provide instant,



The clinical team at Dr. Salem’s office includes (from left) Joyce, Jenny, Vy and Danyelle.

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incredibly clear radiographic images with only 10% of the radiation required by conventional X-rays,” states Dr. Salem. A dental operating microscope was added for endodontic (root canal) procedures, as recent studies have demonstrated use of the microscope results in higher success rates for certain endodontic procedures. Dr. Mark Young, a Harvard endodontic resident, performs all of the root canal procedures in the office and he is an expert in utilizing the dental operating microscope.



Dr. Mark Young is Dr. Salem’s endodontic resident, shown here using the dental operating microscope.

DENTAL IMPLANTS

Although dental implants are thought to be a relatively new



The office team at the front desk is Kathleen (right) and Ginny. Ginny also serves as a clinical dental assistant.

treatment modality, Dr. Salem has been restoring implants since the mid-1980s and his practice has provided the surgical placement of implants since the early 1990s. “In those early years of implant dentistry, the entire staff would stop what they were doing in order to observe an implant procedure in progress. Now,” states Dr. Salem, “implants are a standard, highly predictable and nontraumatic procedure that is carried out on a daily basis. In some cases, we can extract a hopeless tooth, place an implant and deliver a highly aesthetic temporary crown, all in one visit. This is truly a profound example of modern dentistry at work for the benefit of our patients.” Dr. Mathew Lann, the practice’s periodontist, provides the placement of implants, and Dr. Salem and his general dentist associate, Dr. Christine Paige, provide the restoration of the implants. “When Dr. Lann joined our practice in 2003, it was a quantum leap for our patients. Dr. Lann is highly skilled, incredibly well organized and utilizes excellent judgment in his treatment planning and clinical procedures,” states Dr. Salem. Dr. Lann agrees. “Dr. Salem and I work so well together because we are both believers of bringing excellent clinical skills, high organizational

standards and diligent case planning together for the benefit of our patients.”

ORTHODONTICS

The practice also provides the entire complement of orthodontic treatments, including Invisalign invisible orthodontics. Dr. Jason Raney is the practice’s orthodontist and has vast experience with children and adults, with conventional braces as well as Invisalign invisible orthodontics. Dr. Raney is a highly skilled communicator as well as a meticulous practitioner. For example, he has a vast library of digital images that demonstrates every type of orthodontic case and the results of the treatment that he has provided. He will review these actual cases with patients considering orthodontic treatment so that they may preview the results of their treatment before beginning orthodontic care. “It is important to all of our doctors to communicate with patients in a way that helps patients to understand various treatment options, their advantages and disadvantages as well as treatment outcomes and costs. We believe this is paramount in helping our patients to preserve their oral health,” explains Dr. Raney.



PHOTO BY DANYELLE DELUCIA

gas) is provided for light sedation, Ativan tablets are prescribed for a deeper level of sedation and intravenous Valium or Versed can be administered for sedation that is deeper still.

EDUCATION, ENTERTAINMENT, COMFORT

Just as impressive as the array of high-tech equipment that is utilized for dental procedures is the high-tech equipment that is used for patient education, entertainment and comfort. Dr. Salem utilizes an intraoral fiber-optic camera to take pictures of his patients' teeth and oral conditions. "I utilize the camera during my initial examination to educate patients of their oral health problems and during treatment to demonstrate the initial condition of their tooth, the extent of the problem once I have started the procedure and the result of my treatment when complete." Patients are also entertained during dental procedures with video movie glasses that the practice provides for every patient. They are worn like a pair of glasses and they display full-length DVD movies with stereo sound. The practice boasts well over 200 feature films, from the classics to recent blockbusters. If patients prefer music, the practice provides personal CD players and hundreds of CDs to choose from.

BOARD CERTIFICATION

Dr. Lann and Dr. Raney have the honorable distinction of being board-certified specialists. Board-certified specialists undergo a voluntary and rigorous study and testing process after they have become specialists. Only 10% of specialists nationwide are board certified and, as such, these specialists have distinguished themselves as leaders in their respective fields. "I am indeed fortunate to have attracted such a high caliber of doctors and staff to my practice, because the quality of the people we attract is a direct reflection of the quality of our practice," states Dr. Salem.

ORAL SURGERY

For those patients that require oral surgical procedures such as wisdom tooth extraction, biopsies and intravenous sedation, the practice includes Dr. Kenneth Plisner, an oral surgeon with over 30 years of experience.

Because patients may have significant dental anxiety, the practice offers several levels of sedation. Nitrous oxide (laughing



Before treatment with Dr. Salem

After treatment with Dr. Salem



Miyoko Sato, Esq., Speaks About Dr. Salem

“You couldn’t possibly find anyone with a bigger aversion to dentistry than myself.

“His approach is professional. It is so important to him that you understand, right from your first appointment with him, the whole health aspect of your body and how dental health is the apex.

“He has an artist’s flair.

“He has an unbelievable capacity to understand and retain conversations. He seems to remember everything you’ve ever told him.

“Because of my fears, I always thought I wanted a quick and easy dentist, one who would get me in, do what needed to be done and rush me out. Everything changed when I met Dr. Salem.

“He lets me know he’s interested in me, not just me as a patient, but me as a person. He listens carefully.

“Most important, he has made his offices one of the most relaxing places I know. The atmosphere is so calm and restful, but not overly and overtly artful and artificial. His dental chairs face out, and through an overly large window I can see trees and wildlife. I actually look forward to my appointments. Every time I visit, I feel as though I’ve done something good for myself.

“Everyone in that office knows my name, and I know that’s true for every patient he sees.

“He carefully explains all my options.

“He’s never judgmental, unlike other dental offices I’ve visited where the doctor begins immediately by noting that you haven’t been flossing, etc.

“When I’m in the chair, I often see him furrow his brow, but it’s not because something displeases him; it’s because he wants to know what I’m thinking.

“I feel completely safe with him, and I can see his equipment and I know he’s at the very top of the technology curve.

“I particularly like the fact that if I require specialty work I won’t be farmed out. Dr. Salem requires the same high level of both service and quality from his colleagues and staff that he demands in himself.

“When I see a specialist there, I’m greeted by the same receptionists, treated by the same dental hygienists, etc. In other words, I’m not going into a new practice where I don’t know anyone and they don’t know me. We’ve all established relationships.

“One of Dr. Salem’s hygienists found a buildup of plaque on my teeth during a routine cleaning. Rather than being judgmental and scolding me for not brushing better, she asked me instead, ‘Did you know Asians tend to have more tartar on their teeth?’ then explained to me the reasons why. No dental hygienist — or dentist, for that matter — had ever told me that and it was nice to know that I wasn’t the one at fault.

“She recommended I switch to a tartar control toothpaste, which I did, although secretly I thought it was probably just a gimmick. I was wrong, however, and she was correct. It cut down on my tartar buildup significantly, and I’m deeply indebted to her.”



Complementary warm paraffin wax hand treatments and warm towels are provided for every patient, for every visit. States Dr. Salem, “I am determined to show each and every one of my patients how comfortable and relaxing dental care can be with modern technology in the hands of caring doctors and team members.

THE INITIAL ORAL EXAMINATION

“More important than all of the cutting-edge equipment, creature comforts and the doctors’ many honors and educational degrees, is the time that we spend knee to knee with our patients,” explains Dr. Salem. For example, Dr. Salem and Dr. Paige devote over one hour of their time for the patient’s initial examination. States Dr. Salem, “This generous time period allows us to listen to each patient so that we may clearly understand their concerns, their fears, their goals and their previous dental experiences. It allows us to review their medical conditions, medications and how that may influence their oral health and their treatment options. After those concerns are well understood, we can complete a thorough dental examination complete with pictures of our patient’s teeth using the intraoral camera and digital radiographs mentioned above. We also screen each patient for TMJ dysfunction, sleep apnea and oral cancer. Early detection of sleep apnea and oral cancer are critical because early detection cannot only improve the quality of one’s life, but can also save one’s life. Once we have completed



Before treatment with Dr. Salem



After treatment with Dr. Salem

our examination, we will review with our patients, in detail, their oral condition and all appropriate treatment options. Once we have reviewed this information to our patient's satisfaction, we will instruct our patient on proper home care practices, which include brushing and flossing techniques, appropriate mouth rinses, recommendations for fresh breath and any other hygiene concerns that our patients may have. Conducting the examination in this fashion is exceedingly important in helping us to preserve our patient's oral health over the course of their entire lifetime. Our patients are extremely appreciative that we have spent this time with them."

AFFORDABLE CARE

Dr. Salem's practice has always been aware of the costs of dental

Operatories are meticulously clean, bright and relaxing.



Twenty-Year Patient Dana Floyd

"I have been going to Dr. Salem since shortly after he set up his practice, after school, I think. Many, many years ago, a woman I worked with in Braintree, MA, had a daughter who was a dental hygienist and knew Dr. Salem socially somehow. She told me he had just set up an office in our office building and he was terrific. So, I started going to him. This was probably in the late 1980s. Since then, he's worked on practically every tooth in my head in one way or another.

"I know, through experience, that Dr. Salem strives for the very highest levels of excellence in all areas of his practice. I remember having a crown done and him sending the crown back to the lab that created it once or twice because he was not happy with the fit. I honestly would have been fine with it, but he knew it wasn't perfect.

"I feel that I'm always in the very best hands with Dr. Salem and everyone in his office. He has one of the best hygienists I've ever seen, and other topnotch talent as well, I'm sure. I have not personally used any of the other professionals.

"I continually tell my friends and co-workers about Dr. Salem. Even though I live on Cape Cod and work in Rhode Island and New York, I would never consider going to any other dentist. I'm happy to drive the extra distance to get the very best treatment available.

"Apart from his talent and knowledge, I also have found him over these many years to be a compassionate and wonderful man. That speaks volumes to me as well."

care and the sometimes significant investments that patients must make in order to restore teeth and gums to a state of health after years of neglect. The practice is sensitive to these challenges for patients and has instituted many programs to assist patients with extensive dental needs and limited financial resources. For some patients, they merely need to proceed at a slower pace, with high-priority, emergent care first and lower-priority treatments as the

patient's budget allows. Of course, dental insurance defrays much of the costs and no-interest financing is also provided.

Dr. Salem and his associates find great fulfillment in transforming a diseased, broken-down dentition and restoring it to a healthy, stable and attractive part of one's persona. Explains Dr. Salem, "I have experienced over many years of practice that many patients can have the best that modern dentistry has to offer on a limited budget if treatment is carried out in a logical sequence, over a time period that the patient can afford. I feel most fulfilled when I see a patient for whom I have completed extensive dental treatment 10-15 years ago and find that



Doctor of Dentistry publisher Larry Jacobs gets a kick out of the high-tech optical glasses that allow patients to watch a DVD while Dr. Salem is working on their care.

they have not required any additional treatment since. This is the result of a true team effort by our doctors, our staff and, of course, the patient who was motivated to restore their oral health over an extended time period. Certain patients with dire needs and no resources, usually young adults with no place to turn, are given ideal care by all of our general dentists and specialists completely gratis. I am most fortunate to work alongside other doctors and staff members who share my commitment to giving back to our community.”

HONORS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Dr. Salem’s accomplishments and honors in the field of den-

tistry are extraordinary. He is a former clinical professor at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine, where he taught for 17 years. He has published several articles in national and international dental journals on topics ranging from restorations with superior aesthetics and strength, to patient management, to dental product evaluation. He has been a consultant to dental supply and equipment manufacturers and a contributor to continuing education courses designed to teach other dentists. He is the inventor and original patent holder of the Opticlean dental bur, sold worldwide by Sybron Kerr. He is a Master within the Academy of General Dentistry. Of the 160,000 dentists in America, there are approximately 1,000 who have attained Mastership. Most recently, he has become a board-eligible member of the American Board of General Dentistry (ABGD) and is now in the process of board certification. Presently, there are fewer than 100 ABGD board-certified general dentists in the world. He is also a member of the American Dental Association, the Massachusetts Dental Society and the South Shore District Dental Society. ■

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Hours of operation:	
Monday	Thursday
8 a.m.-8 p.m.	8 a.m.-5 p.m.
Tuesday	Friday-Closed
8 a.m.-8 p.m.	
Wednesday	Alternate Saturdays
12 p.m.-8 p.m.	8 a.m.-4 p.m.

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