

What Hump? Working to Identify Problematic Conditions

By Dr. J.C Goodwin

Marty Feldman made me laugh. Many of you will recall his performance in the classic comedy "Young Frankenstein," playing the endearing Igor (which he pronounced with a long 'I' sound), a movie bristling with slapstick and quotable one-liners. When Dr. Frankenstein offers to surgically remove the hump from his back he innocently replies, "What hump?" Maybe I'm just easy, but it always makes me laugh. One would think he was being coy, or maybe just naïve. Or, he could have been in serious denial.

I see this behavior frequently in my profession, to the point of wanting to laugh sometimes, and I might if I weren't dealing with potentially life-threatening health concerns. I'll give you two examples I see frequently.

The first is dentistry's arch nemesis, periodontal disease, or gum disease. The most common infectious disease in the country, affecting as many as 70 percent of us to one degree or another, it has now been linked to increased risk of heart attack and stroke and may actually be the catalyst predisposing people to adult onset diabetes. It is no longer appropriate for a

dentist to "watch it," or to suggest that "it is not getting worse, so you're okay." Nor is it appropriate for a patient to be allowed to justify having a chronic infection in their gums, saying things like "my gums always bleed, its normal for me." If it bleeds when you floss, then it is likely infected. It's not

// Unfortunately, many people are unaware of this option, and yet, were they to take advantage of it, could add ten to twenty years and improve the quality of their life.

the floss and it is NOT NORMAL! And unfortunately, many of us are in denial about this condition.

Another common affliction often ignored or denied is sleep apnea, a killer of even greater magnitude. Many people who suffer from a sleep breathing disorder are truly not aware that they have this condition. Others, however, are fully aware of the symptoms they suffer, which may include heavy snoring, excessive daytime fatigue, inability to concentrate on tasks, acid reflux or awakenings in the night gasping for breath, and yet

will deny they may have a serious health issue. Why? I believe that denial of this condition may often be based in fear. They usually know someone who has a machine to help them breath at night and they also know that they don't want to have that machine. So, it becomes a case of not wanting

and improve the quality of their life.

Many of our afflictions are not as obvious as that of poor Igor's and most not as funny. (You may remember that his hump moved from side to side.) Newer, more effective and less invasive medical techniques are developed all the time and there is no reason to remain in denial. My advice. . . . **LOSE THE HUMP! QCBN**

Dr. JC Goodwin has been in private dental practice in Prescott since 1987. His philosophy of practice incorporates a mix of preventive techniques and high tech treatment methods, including laser surgeries, same day crowns and non-surgical periodontal therapy. He also created the Sleep Effect Center for Apnea Management, providing a



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