

# Monthly Newsletter

SMILE FIRST  
DENTAL WELLNESS

◆  
1 July 2025



## July's Wellness Bite

### Freedom to Feel Good: Sleep, Relief & Summer Vibes

July is here — packed with sunshine, fireworks, and (hopefully) a little rest and reset. And just like SPF protects your skin, your daily dental habits protect your long-term wellness. This month, we're focusing on Wellness Pillar #6: Sleep & Pain Relief, because true health goes beyond your smile, it includes how you sleep, how you feel, and how you live.

We're highlighting an important conversation around sleep apnea, celebrating our very own founder, Dr. Ilie, and as you can tell from the photo he loves to be the life of the party and bring laugh to everyone. We would like also to introduce the futuristic iCEE Toothbrush (yep, it has whitening blue light tech), and featuring a transformation you won't want to miss from one of Zack Cooper's amazing patients.

So whether you're traveling, grilling, or chilling this 4th of July — we invite you to take a moment to check in on your own wellness, rest, and recovery.

Because this summer, freedom means feeling good.

#### In this newsletter:

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Pillar 6  
Sleep and Pain

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Treat Sleep  
Apnea and  
Bruxism

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Postural  
Restoration  
Institute®

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Patient of the  
Month

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Dr. Ilie. Pavel, DDS

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Product of the  
Month

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## Pillar 6 - Sleep and Pain

### The Health You Can't See in the Mirror

We often think of oral health as what we can see: white teeth, healthy gums, aligned smiles. But the mouth also plays a critical role in two things that impact everything: your sleep quality and how your body processes pain.

Poor sleep can lead to fatigue, brain fog, inflammation, and even chronic disease. Jaw pain, clenching, and tension often go unnoticed until they begin interfering with daily life. The good news? There are real solutions and they often start with your dentist.



#### Sleep & Pain: *Foundation for Whole-Body Wellness*

##### Why Sleep and Pain Management Matter More Than You Think?

You might not connect a poor night's sleep or daily jaw pain with your dentist but at Smile First, we do. Pillar #6: Sleep & Pain Relief reminds us that oral health goes beyond your teeth and gums. How you breathe at night, how your bite is aligned, and how much tension you carry all play major roles in your wellness.

This month, we're diving into the link between restful sleep, chronic pain, and dental health, and how small changes can make a big impact on your quality of life.

##### What Causes Sleep & Jaw Pain Issues?

Some of the most common root causes include:

- Sleep apnea: a condition where your airway gets blocked while you sleep
- Teeth grinding or clenching (bruxism):

often happens unconsciously during sleep or stress

- TMJ dysfunction: issues in the jaw joint that create tension, pain, and mobility problems
- Misaligned bite: when your teeth or jaw don't align properly, your muscles overwork to compensate

Left unchecked, these problems can affect your entire body, leading to fatigue, headaches, neck pain, inflammation, and even heart problems.

##### The Consequences of Poor Sleep & Chronic Pain:

- Fatigue & brain fog – Poor sleep reduces your body's ability to restore itself overnight
- Mood swings & anxiety – Interrupted sleep can disrupt emotional regulation
- Digestive issues – Pain and stress impact how well your body absorbs nutrients
- Impaired healing: Your immune system can weaken over time
- Premature aging – Chronic stress and inflammation show up in your skin, posture, and energy levels

##### The Power of a Good Night's Sleep:

Better sleep means more than feeling rested — it's about feeling human again.

When you sleep well and live pain-free, your body works better, your mood improves, and your smile becomes a true reflection of your inner health.

Turn the page to learn how we screen for sleep apnea, who's at risk, and how a small device could change your life one night at a time.



## How We Diagnose and Treat Sleep Apnea and Bruxism

Struggling with snoring, jaw tension, or morning fatigue? It might not just be stress, it could be a sign of sleep apnea or bruxism (grinding your teeth at night).

Left untreated, these conditions can affect not only your smile, but your heart, brain, immune system, and overall vitality.

At SFDW, we offer at-home sleep testing for just \$300 a simple, non-invasive way to get answers from the comfort of your own bed.

### What We Look For

Here's what we screen for when we suspect sleep-related oral health issues:

**Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA):** When your airway becomes partially or fully blocked during sleep, interrupting oxygen flow.

**Bruxism:** Clenching and grinding of teeth, often triggered by disrupted breathing patterns or an unbalanced bite.

### Why does this matter?

Because untreated sleep apnea has been linked to high blood pressure, brain fog, chronic fatigue, and even increased stroke risk. Many patients with mild or moderate apnea remain undiagnosed — especially those who grind their teeth or wake up with neck, jaw, or back pain.



## Our Proven Approach

If you're diagnosed with mild to moderate sleep apnea, we offer a powerful CPAP alternative:

- Custom oral sleep appliances — small, comfortable devices worn at night. They:

- Gently move the jaw forward to keep your airway open
- Are quiet, travel-friendly, and easy to wear
- May be covered by dental or medical insurance
- Often reduce or eliminate teeth grinding by stabilizing your bite

# BETTER

Issue 1 Spring 2024



# SLEEP, BETTER HEALTH

## READY TO BREATHE AND SLEEP BETTER?

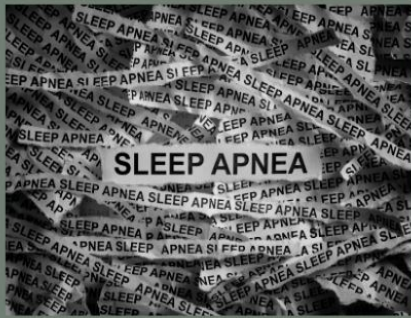
### We're here to help you reclaim it.

If you're having trouble sleeping, waking up tired, or experiencing jaw, neck, or back pain — it may be time to look deeper.

Ask us about scheduling your at-home sleep test  
Or book a consultation to explore your options

You deserve restful sleep, full-body wellness, and a life with less tension.





## How the Postural Restoration Institute® Helps Us Treat TMJ, Neck, and Back Pain Holistically

Did you know that your jaw pain could be coming from your feet or even your breathing pattern?

At Smile First Dental Wellness, we take a whole-body approach to treating jaw issues like TMJ (temporomandibular joint disorder). That's why we collaborate closely with leading Postural Restoration Institute® (PRI) providers like Dr. Dan Houghlum and Zach Cooper. Together, we address not just symptoms, but the underlying imbalances affecting your posture, movement, and nervous system regulation.



## Your Body Is Not Broken, It's Just Out of Sync

At Smile First, we believe healing starts with understanding. TMJ and chronic pain are often not caused by a single issue, but by the way your entire body moves and adapts. By integrating dentistry with PRI-based therapy, we offer a more compassionate and effective path to relief.

## What Is the Postural Restoration Institute®?

The PRI is a pioneering organization that helps patients correct asymmetries in the body especially the patterns that develop from overuse, injury, or daily habits like one-sided breathing or leaning. Their work highlights how every part of the body is interconnected, and how even small imbalances can cause a ripple effect leading to pain, dysfunction, and compensations.

## *How Is TMJ Related to Posture?*

Your jaw is deeply influenced by how you breathe, how your head and neck are positioned, and even how your feet contact the ground. PRI-trained professionals look at the relationship between your diaphragm (your primary breathing muscle), ribcage, and pelvis. If any part of this system is out of alignment, the body compensates—and that compensation often shows up in the jaw, neck, or back.

## *for example..*

TMJ pain can be the result of uneven pressure from an unbalanced bite and poor breathing patterns.

Neck pain can stem from forward head posture, often tied to tight chest muscles and underactive core stabilizers.

Back pain may be your body's way of adapting to foot instability or pelvic torsion, both of which affect the way you stand, walk, and sit.



## *Our Collaborative Approach*

We're proud to work with some of the best PRI practitioners in the country, including:

Dr. Dan Houghlum, a seasoned physical therapist and PRI educator who specializes in correcting neuromuscular patterns and restoring true balance.

Zach Cooper, a movement therapist and coach who bridges the gap between rehab and high-performance living with PRI-informed strategies.



# *Patient* OF THE MONTH

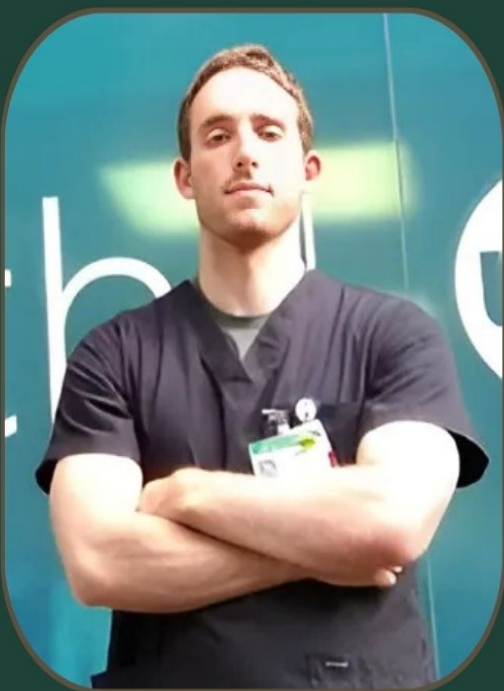
## Zach Cooper

This month, we're proud to highlight Zach Cooper a powerhouse of knowledge, healing, and humility. As a highly experienced physical therapist and fitness coach, Zach has dedicated his life to helping others move better, feel stronger, and overcome physical limitations.

From complete beginners to elite athletes in the NFL, NHL, NBA, and NCAA, Zach's client list is as diverse as his credentials — and his passion for learning is unmatched. He holds dozens of certifications across movement, neurology, rehabilitation, and strength training, making him one of the most comprehensive practitioners in his field.



## Revolution Physical Therapy and Weight Loss



Zach currently sees patients at Revolution Physical Therapy and Weight Loss in downtown Chicago and is in-network with all major insurance providers. If you're dealing with pain, rehab, or just want to move and live better, he's the person to see.

We're grateful to have Zach as part of our Smile First family. His curiosity, commitment to wellness, and genuine kindness make him an incredible patient and an even better human.

Work with Zach:

📍 845 N Michigan Ave, Suite 973W, Chicago  
☎ (312) 651-6255

Book online: <https://www.fitnessscholar.com>



# DR. ILIE. PAVEL, DDS

A LIFE DEDICATED TO HEALTH, COMMUNITY, AND CRAFT

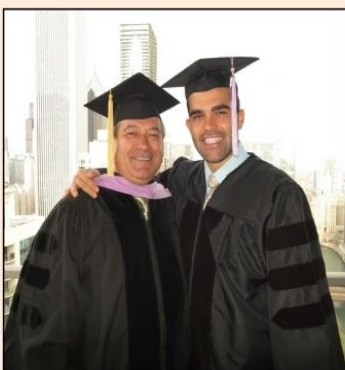


July 18<sup>th</sup> is Dr. Ilie's birthday! Originally from Romania, Dr. Pavel began his healthcare journey in Cluj-Napoca, a historic city nestled in Transylvania, where he completed medical school and began practicing as an internist in Sinaia. In 1986, driven by a passion to grow and serve, he immigrated to the United States and earned his Doctor of Dental Surgery degree from Loyola University of Chicago, where he also taught in the histology department. During his rigorous dental degree program he also worked a night job in a local research lab while also helping raise Dr. Cristian (age 6 at the time) and Anthony who was newly born!

Dr. Pavel is a Board Certified General Dentist and an active leader in organized dentistry. His impressive resume includes roles as:

- President of the North Side Branch (2003–2004)
- Director of the North Side Branch of the Chicago Dental Society (2013–2015)
- Longtime volunteer at the Chicago Midwinter Meeting — one of the most prestigious dental conferences in the world

Beyond the clinic, Dr. Pavel brings a unique flair to the team — he's also a passionate winemaker! As a member of the American Wine Society, he has received multiple medals in international amateur wine competitions. Whether he's restoring smiles or crafting his latest vintage, Dr. Pavel brings care, precision, and passion to everything he does. His friends know him as "Dj Ilie because he always has a great dance playlist and he loves to be the life of the party!



Dr. Ilie lives in Skokie with Mrs. Cristina, and continues to be a vital part of the Smile First mission: exceptional care with heart and always a smile and laughter!



# Product of the Month

by Mel.RDH

Smile First Dentall Wellness

## ICEE X WHITE

## ICEE X BLACK



Blue-light  
whitening  
toothbrush.  
Now for \$150!

- (1) Electric Toothbrush (with 4 settings)
- (2) LED Whitening blue light toothbrush heads (Eco friendly bristles)
- 1) Modern charging base
- (1) Removable charging cord (usb outlet plug not included)
- (2-4) Week battery-charge duration (Battery icon reminder)
- (2) Minute brush timer (30 seconds per quadrant)
- (1) QR code of Dental Hygiene Educational Videos by Mel.RDH Personally (Become an expert with brushing, flossing & tongue scraping)



## Customer Review

**Juliana Silva** ★★★★★

*"I love the sleek design and the fact that it also whitens my teeth!"*



# CELEBRATING INDEPENDANCE AND HEALTHY SMILES

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*Tooth  
tips  
for a  
Sweet  
4th*



## SMILE BRIGHT THIS JULY

As we gather with family and friends to celebrate freedom, don't forget to care for your smile too!

Here are a few easy tips to keep your teeth happy this holiday:

- Opt for crunchy fruits & veggies—they clean as you chew
- Skip chewing on ice (your enamel will thank you!)
- Drink lots of water to rinse sugar away
- Brush & floss before bed, especially after sweet treats

## OFFICE HOURS UPDATE

We'll be closed from Wednesday, July 3rd through Sunday, July 7th in observance of Independence Day.

We'll reopen on Monday, July 8th.

Need an emergency dental appointment before the long weekend?

☎ Call us or leave a voicemail at  
(773) 739-2800.



*Smile  
Bright  
This  
July*