

Heading:

Dental Experts

Subheading:

Dr. Saam Zarrabi and Dr. Yahya Mansour

Rodeo Dental & Orthodontics

About the Experts:

Dr. Saam Zarrabi, D.D.S. is a graduate of UCLA and received his dental degree from the Arthur A. Dugoni University of the Pacific School of Dentistry in San Francisco, where he received a first place award in clinical excellence. He is the CEO and co-founder of Rodeo Dental and Orthodontics. He is also the founder of Dental Media Design Laboratories, co-founder of the Dental division of Project Homeless Connect, and the founder of PlanetEGGs Media.

Dr. Yahya Mansour, D.D.S. is a graduate of the University of the Pacific in San Francisco. He is also designated as a Fellow in the International Congress of Oral Implantology. Prior to receiving his DDS, he received two Bachelors degrees in Neuroscience and Biology as well as a Masters degree in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from the University of California. He continues working to advance his knowledge in implant and cosmetic dentistry.

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What is CAMBRA?

Caries Management by Risk Assessment (CAMBRA) is a way to assess patients and their risk of tooth decay. CAMBRA came into existence about 10 years ago when evidence was published in the *Journal of the California Dental Association* indicating dental cavities could be both managed and prevented through proper risk assessment.

To determine cavity risk, we ask our patients to fill out a questionnaire about their dietary habits, oral hygiene, genetic predispositions, medications, and environmental factors. Then, we perform a painless swab test on the lower teeth to detect the total number of bacteria in the mouth (known as the ATP bioluminescence). This information helps us gauge the patient's overall risk of dental problems. Rodeo Dental & Orthodontics sees CAMBRA as an extremely effective tool to help educate our patients and proactively treat high-risk individuals before cavities and tooth decay occur.

Silver Diamine Fluoride (SDF) is one of the newest ways to combat cavities. What is it?

We use Silver Diamine Fluoride as part of our CAMBRA program because it helps to control active tooth decay and prevent its progression. SDF is made of two components – silver and fluoride – each having separate mechanisms of action. The silver component provides an anti-microbial effect and kills bacteria, while the fluoride component helps prevent further demineralization of the tooth. SDF was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in 2014 but has been available for decades in countries like China, Japan, New Zealand and Australia.

What can patients expect when being treated with SDF?

SDF application is quick, noninvasive and painless. To prepare for the application, we brush the teeth (without paste) and rinse the mouth, then isolate the teeth we will be treating so that they can be cleaned of excess debris and kept dry. Next, we dip a brush into a drop of SDF and place it on the tooth, focusing on the area(s) of decay. After two minutes, we remove the excess SDF and patients are instructed not to eat or drink for one hour.

How effective is SDF in cavity treatment and prevention?

SDF has been shown to be more effective than fluoride varnish in preventing and slowing the development of cavities. In fact, SDF is nearly 75% effective in preventing cavity formation and stopping the progression of tooth decay. It is also quick to apply (less than 10 minutes) and low cost, which makes it more accessible to families. SDF treatment is virtually risk-free, with the only side effect being reversible staining of the tooth at the application site.

Aside from SDF treatment, what other preventative measures do you advise?

We advise our high-risk patients to use special oral rinses, gels, gums, and sprays containing xylitol at home to help decrease the likelihood of cavity formation. Xylitol is a natural sugar substitute found in fibrous plant parts that looks and tastes like real sugar, but has been shown to help prevent tooth decay and even repair tooth enamel. The usage of xylitol is backed by 25 years of dental and medical research and is endorsed by six national dental associations. In fact, we encourage all of our patients to integrate xylitol into their daily lifestyles and diets.