

Give bling a zing without damaging a thing

In the quiet hills of Tuscarawas County, we don't get to see a lot of the unique styles that are seen in urban America. However, we are constantly reminded by the media that we are not very far away. Unless you were born after 1990, you've probably never heard of "bling." Bling is the urbanesque term for gaudy adornment that has become very popular in recent days. A good analogy comes to mind..."Mr. T."

Apparently, it is considered cool and hip by some to have large, gaudy jewelry that may or may not be attached to some form of bodily piercing. As a dentist, I am, of course, concerned. Tongue piercings, by far, are the most dangerous. I will never understand why people willfully have their tongues mutilated in this way....I go to great lengths daily to avoid injuring the tongue by accident!

For years, it has been a



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cultural status symbol for people of some ethnicities to have gold veneers on one or

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more front teeth. I have even made dentures with gold front teeth. This now has been taken to the next level in the form of "grills." A grill is a metallic shell made to wrap over the front teeth that can either be permanently cemented or made to snap on and off. Obviously, there are several potential problems with grills: inad-

vertant aspiration, gingival inflammation, metallic reaction, dental decay, etc.

I guess that bling isn't going to go away, and it simply is a sign of the time. My only advice.... If you're considering bling that involves your mouth, ask your dentist first. Gold veneers or 3/4 crowns can be made on appropriate tooth preparations that function properly. Diamonds, gems, etc. can even be added for extra sparkle. There are probably ways to give the bling a zing without damaging a thing.

Dr. Kevin Huff is a general dentist in Dover, holds the status of "Master" in the Academy of General Dentistry, and is a clinical instructor at the Case School of Dental Medicine.

For questions about dental health or to schedule a complementary consultation, call 330-364-2011, visit www.doctorhuff.net, or ask your regular dentist.