

Port Warwick Dental Arts: Connecting the dots between dental health and total body health

By Terilyn J. Goins, Ph.D.

Famed American singer, Etta James, once said, “When I look out at the people and they look at me and they’re smiling, then I know that I’m loved. That is the time when I have no worries, no problems.”

A simple smile has the power to radiate warmth and affection, put others at ease, and create a stunning first impression. Sadly, many people never harness this power due to the embarrassment they feel from discolored, crooked or broken teeth and/or periodontal (i.e., gum) disease.

It is precisely these types of situations, among others, that attracted practicing dentist, Dr. Lisa Marie Samaha, to the dental profession. Having grown up under the guidance of her father, renowned periodontist, Dr. Francis Samaha, Dr. Lisa Marie Samaha realized her own passion for dentistry. “As a child, I always loved working with my hands and was fascinated as I watched my dad’s hands care for his patients in such a beautiful way. His manner was so endearing; he was all about building a relationship and creating a place of trust and comfort for his patients,” Samaha says.

Dr. Samaha has followed her father’s example as owner and dental practitioner of Port Warwick Dental Arts, creating an atmosphere where safety, compassion, comfort and excellence are the standard.

Set apart from typical dentistry, Dr. Samaha is most impassioned about the connection between dental health and overall physical health. “From my dad, I learned the value of oral health and understood that everything that happens in the mouth affects the rest of the body. I truly believe this is what

I was born to do—to raise awareness of this critical connection between the mouth and the body,” Samaha says.

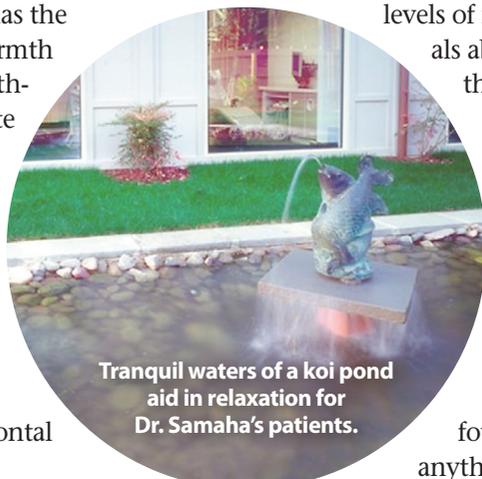
Internationally recognized as an expert on the mouth-body connection, Dr. Samaha is devoted to teaching all

levels of medical professionals about the nature of this intimate connection. Samaha’s passion in this area is driven by the fact that 85 percent of the adult population suffers from dental disease.

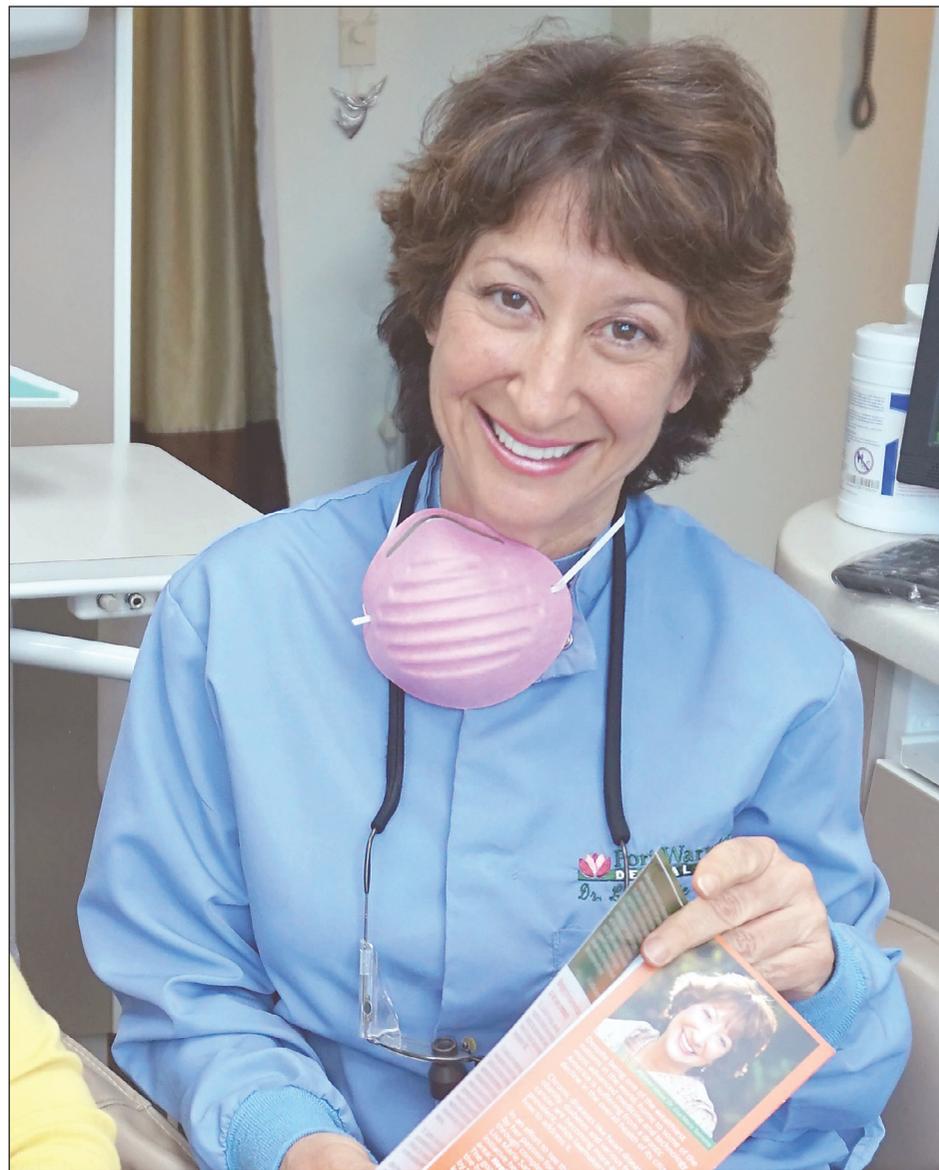
“What I’ve found, more than anything,” Samaha says,

“is that the lack of awareness of the impact of oral health on total health often precludes care. If we increase awareness of the critical life-threatening impact of dental disease on the rest of the body, people would take this issue seriously.”

To create the greatest awareness possible, Dr. Samaha has launched a 2020 initiative designed to attract all Hampton Roads medical practitioners and non-medical individuals. The kick-off for this initiative, the *Say Ahh* event, is scheduled for April 26, 2–5 p.m., at the Mary Immaculate Hospital Conference Center. The event is open to those who care about their own health and the health of their community. Those who attend will be treated to healthy snacks, entertainment, a rap song written by Dr. Samaha and a one-hour documentary film that relays true stories of six families who have discovered how a healthy mouth contributes to a healthy body. Dr. Samaha promises this event “will change one’s perspective and transform one’s thoughts on the connection between the mouth and the body, revealing how dental disease connects to nearly



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Dr. Lisa Marie Samaha

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every degenerative disease known to humankind.”

In addition to being a dentist, Samaha is a professional watercolor artist, displaying much of her art in the Port Warwick Dental Arts facility. It is the intersection between art and dentistry that makes Samaha’s work far more than typical dentistry.

Whether the need is teeth whitening, correcting crooked teeth, restoring damage or decayed teeth, doing dental implants, and/or curing periodontal disease, Dr. Samaha brings an element of creativity to the table. As a professional artist, Samaha sees so much

more than just a mouth in need of care—each patient presents an opportunity to restore health, enhance life and create a smile that is truly a work of art. ◀

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