



## Website Optimization Procedures

**The first thing we do is use well-structured and valid XHTML code.** This means that we separate the content from the presentation to make it easier for “spiders” and “bugs” from search engines to find and gather the most relevant information in the code. If code is invalid, internet browsers attempt to interpret it themselves, sometimes getting it wrong. The worst is when invalid code renders a whole page invalid and it won’t display.

**The second optimization practice we utilize is description in meta tags.** These are like code words, such as your practice name, your last name, “dentist,” your city’s name, “whitening,” “cavity,” “emergencies,” etc. These words, built into the code of your website, help search engines find your site when they’re *crawling*. **The tags/names at the top of each page make a difference, too.** We use H1 tags for all headings. Search engines go to these first when scanning content. We also employ ALT tags on all photos and images.

**Third, when we go live with a site, we submit its URL to Google.** You can do this, too, and as often as you like. Please see the link below for this:

<http://www.google.com/addurl/>

Google has made it clear that there are no guarantees with this, but it’s so easy to do that what can it hurt? It’s not like you have anything to lose by doing it, because it’s easy, quick, and free.

**Another way we’ve found to increase your rankings in the searches is to ask people you know with websites (i.e., a specialist whose office refers to you, friends and family, an organization you sponsor or are a part of, etc.) to add a link to your site.** The more links you establish, the higher your ranking will be (granted that those links actually get hits of people on their way to your site). We think search engines might also equate more links to higher credibility of your site. This is, of course, not to say that within two weeks of going live, your web address will pop up at the top of a Google search; with time, though, it can be accomplished.

**Something to watch out for are search engine optimization companies and the like.** They’ll guarantee you first page results in 24 hours or a certain number of hits, but you know how there always seems to be a catch... Please see this Google article in their [Webmaster Help Center](#) for more accurate information regarding this matter. We do not recommend paying the exorbitant amounts some of these companies will ask for, when most of the time what they’re really going to do is add advertisements to your site. In addition to increased risk for spam and viruses, ads on your site often give the perception that you are unaffordable.

Also, please see this Google guide link for additional info:

[http://www.googleguide.com/google\\_works.html](http://www.googleguide.com/google_works.html)



**Another helpful hint is to include a signature at the end of all your emails with your name and web address (in live link format).** We're not exactly sure how this works, but getting your web address out into cyberspace is our best guess for increased results. **Also, having your site updated a few times a year can help as well.**