

The Rickmansworth Dental Centre



Newsletter

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Welcome to the eleventh Rickmansworth Dental Centre Newsletter. Thank you for your positive feedback on previous issues. If you have any comments on our newsletter or anything you would like to see in it, please let us know.

Practice News

Welcome to our Winter 2003 Newsletter. Christmas and New Year are rapidly approaching. From a purely professional point of view, I hope you don't get the sixpence in your portion of Christmas pudding! As announced previously, we are still aiming to become a member of the British Dental Association's Good Practice scheme. The practice must satisfy a number of relevant standards, all of which are based upon a consensus of what is regarded as good practice by the profession. More details of this can be found at our website (www.thedentalcentre.org) or at the practice. It is taking several months to complete all the necessary work to be accepted onto the scheme, but we are gradually getting there. It is our way of showing that you are getting the best care and attention possible.

Plans are progressing for the major refurbishment of the surgery mentioned in our previous newsletters. If all goes according to schedule we should be able to announce a date for the start of the project in the New Year.



Tooth Whitening

We are seeing great results with our 'at home' tooth whitening system. We get our whitening kits direct from America, where it is the number one system. We have just received a delivery of a new higher strength formulation, which gives optimum results in less than a week! Further information can be obtained from The Dental Centre.



The Audiotooth

At the moment the Audiotooth does not actually exist, but is part of the new Future Product awards, displayed on the ground floor of the Wellcome Wing in the Science Museum.

The audio tooth implant is a new concept in communication. It allows useful information to be sent to you in secret, wherever you are and whenever you need it.

A surgeon implants a tiny device into one of your teeth. This implant converts data received from a mobile telephone, radio or computer into vibrations, which resonate through your jawbone into your inner ear. You - and only you - can hear the information.



Holiday

Adam will be on holiday from 17th to 27th December. The practice will still be open and the phone manned during normal opening times. Arrangements will be made for patients with severe emergencies.

We will reopen as normal on 29th, 30th and 31st December. The practice will then close again until Monday 5th January 2004.

In an emergency please phone the practice for emergency



Focus On Dentures

What is a denture?

A denture is an appliance which is worn to replace lost or missing teeth. A complete or full denture is one which replaces all of the natural teeth in either the upper or lower jaws. A partial denture fills in the spaces created by lost or missing teeth, with some of the natural teeth remaining.

Why bother with a denture?

Replacing lost or missing teeth has substantial benefits for your health and appearance. A denture can provide support for cheeks and lips. Without this support, sagging facial muscles can make a person appear older and reduce their ability to eat and speak. A partial denture as well as improving things aesthetically will help stabilise the position of the remaining teeth and prevent problems in the future. There are other ways to fill gaps in the mouth apart from dentures, such as bridges or implants. Adam will be able to advise you of what treatments are



Dental Hygienist

Since November, Donna, our dental hygienist has changed back to her Monday and Thursday sessions.

There is information about the hygienist and what she does on the back of this newsletter.

On the subject of dental hygiene, those of you who floss (or are thinking about flossing!), might be interested in a new product we have just got in. Called 'Floss Picks', they make the flossing process much less fiddly. Please ask for details.



available and will give the best results.

What are dentures made of?

There are two types of denture that are usually made:

Acrylic Resin dentures

These are commonly known as plastic dentures. They can replace from one to all the teeth and most full or complete dentures are made from this material.

Metal-based dentures

Some people find plastic dentures too bulky and additional strength may be required if the patient has a heavy bite. It is possible to make a metal-based denture that will be much lighter in its construction and will cover less of the palate.

As metal-based dentures are tooth borne, they are more secure than acrylic dentures and often Partial chrome denture cause less long-term trauma to the remaining teeth and supporting tissues. The metal used is a chrome cobalt alloy, which has been shown to be excellent in resisting corrosion in the mouth and will not produce allergic reactions.

How are new dentures made?

Each denture is custom made for your mouth. The various stages take at least four visits. Once the completed dentures have been fitted it is not unusual to have to see us for minor adjustments to the denture.

What will dentures feel like?

New dentures may feel awkward or even uncomfortable for a few weeks until you become accustomed to them. The dentures may feel loose while the muscles of your cheek and tongue learn to keep them in place. It is not unusual to experience minor irritation or soreness during this period. You may also find that saliva flow temporarily increases. Eating will take a little practice. You should start with soft foods cut into small pieces. As you become more used to your denture, you can add other foods until you return to your normal healthy diet. Pronouncing certain words may require practice. Reading out loud and repeating difficult words will help. As your mouth becomes accustomed to the dentures, these problems should diminish. If any problems persist, particularly irritation or soreness, be sure to contact us. Some people find that a denture fixative can help in the first few days of wearing a new denture. This is especially so with complete dentures. However, most dentures will stay in place once you

have got used to them and learn to control them with your tongue and the muscles around your mouth. Even though a great deal of care is put into making dentures, many people get extra confidence using a denture fixative. There is no reason why you can't use a fixative on a daily basis if you are worried about your denture falling down in public.

How do I take care of my dentures?

Dentures are very delicate and may break if dropped. When cleaning dentures it is recommended that you do so over a folded towel or sink of water. When you are not wearing your dentures, they should be stored in a container containing enough water to cover them. Like natural teeth, dentures must be brushed daily to remove food debris and plaque. Brushing helps prevent dentures becoming stained and helps your mouth stay healthy. There are special denture cleaning brushes available but a soft bristled toothbrush can also be used. Avoid using hard-bristled brushes which can cause damage. The use of an effervescent denture cleaner can be used to help remove stubborn stains and leave your denture feeling fresher.

Even with full dentures, you still need to take good care of your mouth. Every morning and evening, brush your gums, tongue and palate (roof of your mouth) with a soft –bristled brush. This removes plaque and stimulates circulation in the mouth. It is vitally important that partial denture wearers brush their teeth thoroughly every day to prevent tooth decay and gum disease that can lead to further teeth being lost.

How often should I see the dentist?

Regular dental check-ups and having your teeth professionally cleaned are vital for maintaining healthy teeth and gums. We usually recommend that under normal circumstances this should be done every 6 months. Full denture wearers should consult us as to the frequency of visits.

Visiting the Dental Hygienist

At The Dental Centre we have a dental hygienist, Donna. She is here on Mondays and Thursdays.

Listed below are a few of the most frequently asked questions about hygienists and what a visit to the hygienist involves.

What is a hygienist?

Dental hygienists are specially trained to work with the dentist in providing care tailored to the patients' needs.

They play an important role in dental health care and are mainly concerned with gum health, education in correct home care and the application of preventive materials to the teeth and gums.

The hygienist's provides professional cleaning of the teeth for the patient. Most importantly they educate the patient in the best way to keep the teeth free of plaque.

Why is this treatment important?

Regular professional cleaning combined with your home care will help maintain a healthy mouth. A clean and healthy mouth will improve your appearance, help you keep your teeth and give you fresh breath.

Can a hygienist help prevent dental disease?

The training of the hygienist is centred on preventing dental disease. Carefully removing the deposits that build up on the teeth and teaching you how to prevent it reforming again, will go a long way to slowing the progress of gum disease. Anti-bacterial gels and solutions can be applied under the gum to kill the bacteria causing gum disease. By discussing your diet and recommending other preventive measures your decay rate can also be reduced.

Children can benefit from having their teeth polished. The hygienist can also apply fluoride gels and solutions to help prevent decay. The permanent back teeth can also benefit from having the fissures sealed.

Why doesn't the dentist do this work?

Dr. Deitsch will carry out this type of work. However, the hygienist has been specially trained to carry out scaling and polishing and can spend longer with you. They are also expert at teaching you how to look after your teeth and gums. Often the hygienist will spend a number of appointments getting the gums healthy ready for the dentist to do the more complex treatment.

Will the treatment hurt?

Scaling and polishing is usually pain-free. However, if you do experience some discomfort the hygienist can eliminate this with the use of topical anaesthetic creams or by giving you some local anaesthetic. It is important that you let the hygienist know at the time so that some pain control can be given.

What can I do to help the Hygienist?

You can do a great deal to help yourself and the hygienist as you are in control of your mouth between visits to the practice.

Your hygienist will have shown you how to remove plaque with a toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste. You will also have been shown how to clean between your teeth with floss, tape or little brushes. There are many products now available and your hygienist will recommend those that are appropriate for you.

Do I need to see the hygienist?

Following your routine examination Dr. Deitsch will advise you if you require a visit to the hygienist. If you feel you wish to see the hygienist anyway, please contact the surgery and this can be arranged for you.

If you have any queries or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.



Adam Deitsch and all the staff at The Dental Centre wish you and your families Seasons' Greetings and a healthy and happy New Year. Don't forget you can find us online at www.thedentalcentre.org

