

# The Rickmansworth Dental Centre

## Newsletter

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Welcome to the 33<sup>rd</sup> 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 Summer 2009 Newsletter. We hope you are having a good, if slightly wet, one - you can always use that new barbeque next year!

There has been a lot going on behind the scenes at The Dental Centre. We've been busy updating all our infection control procedures and health and safety policies. This should make your visit to the Dental Centre and any treatment received even safer. There have also been some 'not so behind the scenes' changes and you will be seeing some new faces when you next visit, more of that below.

Remember, if there is anything you would like to see at the practice or if there is any way we can make your visit more pleasant, please let us know and we will try to oblige.

### Happy Birthday To Us

We are celebrating our 9<sup>th</sup> birthday this Summer at The Dental Centre. We are still continually updating and improving all areas of the practice to provide you with the best treatment possible. Hopefully we can continue to do this for many more years to come.

### Hellos and Goodbyes

We have had to say goodbye to our receptionist, Santok. This allows us to announce the fantastic news, that after her year's sabbatical, we can now welcome back our previous receptionist, Pam, on a permanent basis. Unfortunately, Imran, our hygienist has had to return to Denmark due to family issues. He will be sadly missed and we wish him and his family well for the future. We are pleased to introduce our new dental hygienist, Kate. Kate is a dental hygienist and therapist, so she can perform more advanced procedures than a hygienist. Initial feedback has been good - as gentle as Imran! Donna is still with us one Saturday morning a month.

Autumn, our dental nurse, successfully passed her professional exams and is now due to start a University course in September with the aim of becoming a radiographer. We wish her every success. Our new dental nurse is Ewelina, from Poland, so we welcome her with a big 'Cześć' (that hopefully is Polish for 'Hello').



### Mouth Cancer

A worrying report, just released by Cancer Research UK, shows the numbers of cancers of the lip, mouth, tongue and throat in people in their forties have risen by 26% in the past decade.

Alcohol consumption has doubled since the 1950s and is the most likely culprit alongside smoking, says Cancer Research UK.

Each year in the UK around 1,800 people die from the disease and there are 5,000 newly diagnosed cases per year.

Other risk factors that may be involved include a diet low in fruit and vegetables, and the sexually transmitted human papillomavirus (HPV), which also causes cervical cancer. Figures produced by Cancer Research UK show that since the mid-1990s, rates of oral cancers have gone up by 28% for men in their forties and 24% for women.

Mouth cancer is a condition that can affect the lips, tongue, cheeks and throat. It kills one person every five hours in the UK and the number of new cases is rising faster than almost any other cancer. At your routine check up we will not only check your teeth, but your whole mouth and surrounding area. Look out for any changes including ulcers that haven't healed after three weeks, lumps, or any red or white patches in the mouth. If you have any concerns then contact us immediately.

Remember: **If in doubt, get checked out!**

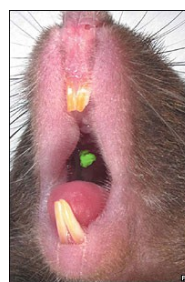
More information can be found online at [www.mouthcancer.org](http://www.mouthcancer.org).

### New Teeth?

A more pleasant recent news story in the press. Scientists in Japan say they've been able to grow brand new teeth in mice in areas where their old teeth used to be.

Researchers from the University of Tokyo hope that their work will in the future make it possible to grow new teeth and even organs for people too. The experts put cells containing all the information for building a tooth into the jawbones of mice. These cells then grew into new teeth that were just as strong as those that come through naturally. They added a green colour to the cells so they could be sure the mice didn't grow replacement teeth on their own.

Unfortunately these new teeth also contained nerve tissue - so they could still give pain. Reports that the recipients of these new teeth will get cheese cravings have yet to be confirmed!



### Dental Hygienist

We still have two hygienists at the practice, helping patients keep their teeth and gums healthy. As you have been reading, our new hygienist, Kate, is here all day Monday and Thursday. Donna is here one Saturday morning a month. If you wish to book a session with the hygienist at the same time you have your routine visit with Adam, just let Pam know. There is information about hygienists and what they do on the back of this newsletter.



### Focus On Cold Sores

#### What is a cold sore?



A cold sore is a small, painful raised area of small, fluid-filled blisters, usually where the lip joins the surrounding skin.

The blisters are painful and dry up to make a yellow crust which gradually heals in a few days. Cold sores are usually found on the lips but you can get them in other places, such as in the nostrils, on the nose or around the outside of the mouth. Cold sores tend to last 5 to 7 days and can keep coming back. Most people only have them once or twice a year.

#### How do I get them?

Cold sores are caused by a virus (a 'Herpes Simplex' virus). You first get this virus in childhood or early adulthood, and it may cause a fever and mouth ulcers

(called 'primary herpetic gingivostomatitis'). About a third of people who get this 'primary' infection go on to develop cold sores in later life. However, many people with cold sores may not have been aware of this primary infection

#### What brings on the cold sores?

Cold sores usually appear when people are ill with something else, for example with a cold (hence the name) or 'flu. Sunlight and ultra-violet light can often bring on an attack of cold sores, and occasionally women find that they develop cold sores at particular stages of their menstrual cycle.

#### Are they infectious?

Yes. Cold sores are infectious and the infecting virus can be passed to other people by close contact (such as kissing). A cold sore is most infectious when it is blistering. It is important to try and avoid



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touching cold sores as you can pass the virus on to other people's hands and even, very rarely, to your own eyes. Avoid squeezing, pinching or pricking the cold sore as this can spread the infection.

#### **Can they be treated?**

Yes. Antiviral creams, such as aciclovir and penciclovir, ease the pain and blistering and help the sores heal more quickly. You can buy aciclovir from a chemist, but penciclovir has to be prescribed by your doctor. Both these creams should be applied as early as possible when the cold sore starts to develop and should be applied regularly.

#### **How can I avoid getting one?**

Once you have had the virus it remains with you and there is little you can do to avoid an attack. How often the cold sores appear varies from person to person. However, if sunlight seems to bring on your cold sores, it is sensible to put sun block on your lips when going out into strong sunlight.

#### **If I have a cold sore should I see my doctor?**

Cold sores generally clear up without treatment in about a week. However, if you have a health condition that has weakened your immune system or the sores don't heal within two weeks on their own, see your doctor. If you often get attacks, your doctor may be able to prescribe an antiviral medication to treat the sores.

#### **I have a cold sore but am due to see my dentist. Will they still be able to treat me?**

If you have a cold sore and are due to visit the dentist or hygienist, check with them first. Some dentists prefer not to treat patients with active cold sores as the affected area may be painful, and may crack and bleed during dental treatment

#### **What if I'm breast-feeding?**

Breast-feeding shouldn't be stopped. However, don't kiss your baby, especially near the mouth or eyes, while you have an active sore as this may pass the infection to your baby.

#### **Can you only get cold sores around the mouth or can you get them on other parts of the body?**

The virus that causes cold sores can also cause similar diseases on other parts of the body (for example, the fingers, eyes and genitals). It is therefore important not to touch cold sores as you may accidentally spread the virus to other parts of your body.

**Further information can be obtained from The Herpes Viruses Association. Tel: 0845 123 2305. [www.herpes.org.uk](http://www.herpes.org.uk)**

### **Visiting the Dental Hygienist**

At The Dental Centre we have two dental hygienists. Kate is here on Mondays and Thursdays. Donna works here one Saturday morning a month.

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 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 can carry out this type of work. However, the hygienist has also 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?**

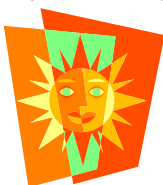
You can do a great deal to help yourself and the hygienist as you are in control of your mouth between visits to the practice.

The 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 the 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.



*Hope you have a Sunny Summer.  
With Best Wishes from Adam Deitsch and all the staff at The Dental  
Centre. Don't forget you can find us online at  
[www.thedentalcentre.org](http://www.thedentalcentre.org)*

