



# The Rickmansworth Dental Centre Newsletter

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Welcome to the 66<sup>th</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 Winter 2018 Newsletter. We hope you are keeping well and enjoying 2018. All is well at The Dental Centre and we are looking forward to providing your dental care for another year. 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.



## Thank You

Adam and all the staff at The Dental Centre would like to thank everyone for their cards, presents and good wishes over the festive period. We would like to take this opportunity to wish you a belated happy and healthy New Year.



## Brighter Teeth

Wish your teeth were a bit brighter? Next time you're visiting The Dental Centre, please do not hesitate to ask Adam or any of the team about the available options. Tooth whitening treatments are becoming increasingly popular. At the Dental Centre, we find these treatments are giving excellent results while not damaging the teeth. Studies have shown that our appearance plays a major role in the success of our personal and professional life. Like your hair, cosmetics and clothes, whiter teeth can completely change your appearance.



## Friends and Family Test

As part of our NHS contractual obligations, when you receive care or treatment within the NHS, you will be asked to fill out a short questionnaire to give us feedback. The questionnaire simply asks if you would recommend The Dental Centre to your friends and family. This is already being done in other areas of the NHS in an attempt to improve the quality of services provided. This has been running since 1st April 2015 and the responses received so far have been extremely positive. We will aim to keep up the high standards to which we aspire. We have now introduced a non-NHS version of the Friends and Family Test to allow those patients not seen within the NHS to give their feedback.



Our comments and suggestions box is still present in the waiting room and we welcome all patients to give feedback on their experience at The Dental Centre.

## National Dentist Day

6<sup>th</sup> March 2018 is officially National Dentist Day. We're not quite sure what this involves, but it's also known as Appreciate You're Dentist Day, so... Just saying!



## Dental Hygienists

Our two hygienists at The Dental Centre, Alicia and Asma, are helping patients keep their teeth and gums healthy. They are here Monday, Wednesday, Friday and one Saturday morning a month. If you contact Pam on reception, she will be able to give you further information.



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.

## A Brief History of Toothbrushes

While we're on the subject of cleaning teeth here's a potted history of the humble toothbrush. Did you know the first toothbrushes were actually twigs our ancestors chewed on, using the frayed ends to cleanse their teeth? Around 5,000 B.C., the Egyptians used crushed eggshells and ground animal hooves to clean and polish their teeth. By the 1700s, a British inventor had adapted a design first seen in China – a bone handle with boar bristles inserted into small holes and secured with wire. Modern toothbrushes with nylon bristles arrived in the late 1930s, and the first electric toothbrush was introduced in 1954.



Another interesting fact, nothing to do with toothbrushes, is that during the Middle Ages in Germany – the cure for a toothache included a kiss from a donkey. We have no plans to introduce donkey kissing as one of our treatment options at The Dental Centre at the moment, but should the clinical evidence change, we may have to reconsider!

## GDPR

The **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** (EU) 2016/679 is a regulation in EU law on data protection and privacy for all individuals within the European Union. It becomes enforceable from 25th May 2018 and aims primarily to give control back to EU citizens and residents over their personal data.



We take great care of the personal data we hold about our patients. A copy of our current Data Protection Policy is available on request or from our website. We will only share your data with another health body, for example, if you need to be referred for treatment. We do not share your data with any other parties.

As part of the GDPR regulations, we need your permission to hold your data and send you information, e.g. Your recall letter, this newsletter. Therefore when you attend we will ask if we have this permission and enter it on our practice software. Thank you for your understanding.

## Focus On Dental Examinations



When you receive your reminder for your routine dental check up, you may wonder why you should make an appointment and what occurs during the dental examination.

It is important for you to have regular dental examinations, so that we can help you to maintain a healthy mouth and also check for any early signs of dental problems, such as decay or gum disease. This will enable us to rectify the problem early before it gets too advanced and requires more complicated treatment.

At the start of the check up Adam will check your medical history. If there have been any new illnesses or medications, please let him know, in case it has some affect on your treatment. If you are having any problems or have any concerns with your mouth, please let us know. It may be helpful to note down any problems or questions before the appointment as they may be forgotten in the heat of the moment! If you are feeling nervous please let us know as we can help you relax. After the initial consultation we are ready to sit you back and examine your mouth. Firstly we check your teeth for cavities and broken fillings or crowns. Dental decay may appear as a hole or sometimes as a dark shadow underneath the surface of the hard enamel coating of the tooth. The occlusion or bite of the teeth (how teeth of the upper and lower jaws fit together) is then assessed. This may indicate a need for treatment for bruxism (grinding the teeth) or

malocclusion (e.g. braces).

Adam will then check the gums and your general oral hygiene to ensure there are no problems. He may use a special probe to test the depth of the pockets (the gap between the tooth and the gum) around your teeth in order to detect gum disease.

Next the soft tissues (e.g., tongue, cheeks, inner and outer lips, floor and palate of the mouth) are checked. This is done by a visual inspection of the inside of the mouth to identify any sores, swelling, growths or other abnormalities that may indicate health problems, such as infection or oral cancer. This is why Adam gets you to stick your tongue out at him, which amuses many patients. There is also a check of the head and neck area. This may include visual examination of the face, neck and lips for swelling, bleeding or other abnormalities. Additional areas examined may include:

The jaw or Temporomandibular joint (TMJ), where the lower jaw connects to the skull. The dentist may ask patients to open and close their mouths, or move their lower jaw from side to side. Pain or tenderness in the area may indicate a problem, such as TMJ disorder. Salivary glands, located below the tongue and around the jaw, may be observed and felt by hand for inflammation that may indicate infection or disease.

Lymph nodes in the neck, may also be checked by Adam to find any signs of infection or disease.

We may then take radiographs if necessary. Usually two small radiographs of your back teeth are taken approximately every three years or more regularly if you are prone to problems. These show any hidden decay between the teeth and the level of the bone which may show gum disease. Other x-rays may be taken to give a close up of any problem areas.

When the examination is complete, Adam will discuss the findings with you and offer any relevant advice. Emergency treatment, small restorations or a basic clean of the teeth may be able to be done after the examination. A further appointment with Adam, the hygienist or even a referral to a specialist might have to be arranged after the examination if additional treatment is necessary.

Finally we will recommend a date for your next visit. The time to your next check-up could be as short as 3 months or as long as 2 years – or up to 1 year if you are under 18. Generally speaking, the lower your risk of dental problems, the longer it will be before your next check-up. This may vary at different times of your life depending on the condition of your teeth, gums and mouth or other changes in your health or lifestyle.

Some full denture wearers assume that because they have no teeth they don't need see a dentist. With increasing age the chance of oral cancers or other lesions forming within the mouth increases and it is therefore important for us to check this. Dentures will also become loose with age due to the bone shrinking and may need replacing or the fitting surface relining. Therefore we recommend that patients with full dentures attend every two years.

## Visiting the Dental Hygienist

At The Dental Centre we have dental hygienists here on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and one Saturday morning a month (please contact the surgery for further details).

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.



*Have a wonderful Winter!  
With Best Wishes from Adam Deitsch and all the staff at  
The Dental Centre.*

