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Welcome to the 67<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 Summer 2018 Newsletter. We trust you are keeping well and enjoying the glorious weather. Make the most of it, because we'll soon be complaining how bad the weather is!

In this newsletter we are focusing on mouth cancer. Whereas the majority of cancers are declining in numbers, mouth cancer is growing especially in younger adults and females.

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.



### Brighter Teeth

Wish your teeth were a bit brighter? Next time you're visiting The Dental Centre, please 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.



are more than 640,000 cases of mouth cancer diagnosed each year worldwide and it is the eleventh most common cancer. In the United States there are around 43,000 cases each year.

In some countries there is an increased risk because of problems such as tobacco chewing - in India, for example - and the rates are even higher. There are, on average, almost 7,800 new cases of mouth cancer diagnosed in the UK each year. The number of new cases of mouth cancer is on the increase, and in the UK has increased by over half in the last decade alone.

#### Do people die from mouth cancer?

Yes. More than 2,300 people in the UK die from mouth cancer every year. Many of these deaths could be prevented if the cancer was diagnosed early enough. As it is, people with mouth cancer are more likely to die than those having cervical cancer or melanoma skin cancer.

#### What can cause mouth cancer?

Most cases of mouth cancer are linked to tobacco and alcohol. Cigarette, cigar and pipe smoking are the main forms of tobacco use in many parts of the world. However, the traditional habits in some cultures of chewing tobacco, betel quid, gutkha and paan are particularly dangerous.

Alcohol increases the risk of mouth cancer, and if tobacco and alcohol are taken together the risk is even greater.

Over-exposure to sunlight can also increase the risk of cancer of the lips.

Many recent reports have linked mouth cancer to the human papillomavirus (HPV). HPV is the main cause of cervical cancer and affects the skin that lines the moist areas of the body.

HPV can be spread through oral sex, and research now suggests that HPV could soon rival smoking and drinking as one of the main causes of mouth cancer.

Practising safe sex and limiting the number of partners you have may help reduce your chances of getting HPV. Many people get HPV during their lives and for many this does not cause a problem.

There are now HPV vaccines for both girls and boys. They were developed to fight cervical cancer, but it is likely that they will also help to reduce the rates of mouth cancer. These vaccines are given at age 12 to 13 before sexual activity starts.

#### What are the signs of mouth cancer?

Mouth cancer can appear in different forms and can affect all parts of the mouth, tongue and lips. Mouth cancer can appear as a painless mouth ulcer that does not heal normally. A white or red patch in the mouth can also develop into a cancer. Be aware of any unusual lumps in your mouth or jaw area and any persistent hoarseness. It is important to visit your dental team or doctor if these areas do not heal within three weeks. If you aren't sure, go for a check-up anyway.

### Happy Birthday To Us

We are celebrating our 18<sup>th</sup> birthday this Summer at The Dental Centre. So now The Rickmansworth Dental Centre can vote, buy a lottery ticket and see a horror film. We are very unlikely to do any of these things. However, 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.



### Cheers!

It may stain your teeth, but red wine contains chemicals that could also help prevent tooth decay and gum disease, according to a study published recently in the Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry. A team of researchers in Italy discovered that red wine contains polyphenol, a micronutrient that reduces the ability of bad bacteria, known to cause dental plaque, cavities and gum disease to adhere to teeth and gums. Unfortunately, this study used de-alcoholised red wine and experiments were only done in the laboratory, and not the mouth. Laboratory conditions may not accurately reflect what really happens in the mouth. It is possible that other components in red wine, such as alcohol, sugars and acids, could counteract the antibacterial effects of the polyphenols. In addition, the wine may not spend long enough in the mouth to have these effects in real life. These study results may also have differed if other red wines had been tested. Therefore, this study does not necessarily prove that drinking red wine prevents tooth decay.

Although this type of research might lead to the discovery of a chemical that might be useful in a toothpaste, it is unlikely that dentists will ever suggest that drinking red wine is a good way to protect your teeth. Sorry!



### Teeth

From 17<sup>th</sup> May through to 16<sup>th</sup> September 2018, The Wellcome Collection in Central London is holding an exhibition entitled 'Teeth'.

From folk remedies and tooth fairies to barber-surgeons and professional dentists, Teeth tells the tale of our pursuit of a pain-free mouth and the perfect smile.

There are over 150 objects, including ancient protective amulets and dental bling, dentures and drills, sketches and spittoons, tooth transplants and toothpaste ads.

"All the images, objects and artworks you could ever need to put a smile on your face" – Time Out



### Focus On Mouth Cancer

#### What is mouth cancer?

Most people have heard of cancer affecting parts of the body such as the lungs or breasts. However, cancer can appear in the mouth, where the disease can affect the lips, tongue, cheeks and throat.

#### Who can be affected by mouth cancer?

Anyone can be affected by mouth cancer, whether they have their own teeth or not. Mouth cancers are more common in people over 40, particularly men. However, research has shown that mouth cancer is becoming more common in younger patients and in women. There



### How can mouth cancer be detected early?

Mouth cancer can often be spotted in its early stages by your dental team during a thorough mouth examination. If mouth cancer is diagnosed early, then the chances of a cure are good. Many people with mouth cancer go to their dentist or doctor too late.

### Is there anything I can do at home?

Be aware of what is going on in your mouth. Examine yourself regularly. Ulcers that do not heal within three weeks, any unusual red or white patches, lumps in your neck or jaw area, or persistent hoarseness are all reasons for asking your dental team or doctor to examine you. There is probably nothing seriously wrong but an early diagnosis could save your life.

### What is involved in a full check-up of the mouth?

The inside of your mouth and your tongue will be examined with the help of a small mirror. The examination will also look at your neck and underneath your jaw. Adam will carry out this examination as part of a routine dental check-up. Remember, your dental team can see parts of your mouth that you cannot see easily yourself.

### What happens if the dentist finds a problem?

If they find something unusual they will refer you to a consultant at the hospital, who will carry out a thorough examination of your mouth and throat. A small sample of the cells may be gathered from the area (a biopsy), and these cells will be examined under the microscope to see what is wrong.

### What happens next?

If the cells are cancerous, more tests will be carried out. These may include overall health checks, blood tests, x-rays or scans. These tests will decide what course of treatment is needed.

### Can mouth cancer be cured?

If mouth cancer is spotted early, the chances of a complete cure are good, and the smaller the area or ulcer the better the chance of a cure. However, too many people come forward too late because they do not have regular mouth examinations.

### How can I make sure that my mouth stays healthy?

Stop smoking, and cut down on the amount of alcohol you drink.

Eat a balanced, healthy diet with at least five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. This can also help protect against many other cancers.

Visit your dental team regularly.

## 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.

*Hope you have an excellent 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)*

