

The Rickmansworth Dental Centre

Newsletter

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Welcome to the seventh 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



Happy New Year from all at The Dental Centre. We hope you had a good festive season and are managing to avoid all the winter bugs that are currently making the rounds. As we announced in our last newsletter, our aim for 2003 is to become a member of the British Dental Association's Good Practice scheme. We have already started working towards acceptance into the scheme, the basis of which is the following ten commitments:

1. We aim to provide dental care of consistently good quality, for all patients.
 2. We only provide care that meets your needs and wishes.
 3. We aim to make your treatment as comfortable and convenient as possible.
 4. We look after your general health and safety while receiving dental care.
 5. We follow the British Dental Association's guidelines on infection control.
 6. We check for mouth cancer and tell you what we find.
 7. We take part in continuing professional development to keep our skills and knowledge up to date.
 8. We train all staff in practice-wide work systems and review training plans once a year.
 9. We welcome feedback and deal promptly with any complaints.
 10. Every member of the practice is aware of the need to work safely under General Dental Council guidelines.
- To comply with each commitment, 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. It may take several months to complete all the necessary work to be accepted onto the scheme, but it is our way of showing that you are getting the best care and attention possible.

Holiday

Adam will be on holiday for the week 7th-11th April. The practice will still be open and the phone manned. Arrangements will be made for patients with severe emergencies.



Dental Hygienist

Donna, our dental hygienist, started at the practice almost a year ago. She has proved very popular and many patients are now showing the benefits of her treatment. There is information about the hygienist and what she does on the back of this newsletter.



Focus On Bad Breath



What causes bad breath?

Bad breath is a very common problem and there are many different causes. Persistent bad breath is usually caused by the smelly gases released by the bacteria that coat your teeth and gums. However, strong foods like garlic and onions can add to the problem. Smoking is also one of the main causes of bad breath, along with certain illnesses such as nasal and stomach conditions. Bits of food that get caught between the teeth and on the tongue will rot and can sometimes cause an unpleasant smell. Bad breath can also be caused by some medical problems. Dry mouth (xerostomia) is a condition that affects the flow of saliva. This causes bacteria to build up in the mouth and this leads to bad breath. Dry mouth may be caused by some medicines, salivary gland problems or by continually breathing through the mouth instead of the nose. Older people may produce less saliva, causing further problems. If you suffer from dry mouth Dr. Deitsch may be able to suggest ways of dealing with the problem. Other medical conditions that cause bad breath include infections in the throat, nose or lungs; sinusitis; bronchitis; diabetes or liver or kidney problems. If we find that your mouth is healthy, you may be referred to your family GP or a specialist to find out the cause of your bad breath.

Tobacco also causes its own form of

bad breath. The only solution in this case is to stop smoking. As well as making your breath smell, smoking causes staining, causes loss of taste and irritates the gums. People who smoke are more likely to suffer from gum disease and also have a greater risk of developing cancer of the mouth, lung cancer and heart disease. Ask us, your pharmacist or practice nurse for help in quitting. If you do stop smoking, but still have bad breath, then you need to seek further advice

How can I tell if I have bad breath?

Lots of small signals can show that you have bad breath. Have you noticed people stepping away when you start to talk? Do people turn their cheek when you kiss them goodbye?

If you think you might have bad breath, there is a simple test that you can do. Simply lick the inside of your wrist and sniff — if the smell is bad, you can be pretty sure that your breath is too.

How can the dentist help?

If you do have bad breath, you will need to start a routine for keeping your mouth clean and fresh. Regular check-ups will allow Dr. Deitsch to find any problems. The earlier the problems are found, the more effective the treatment will be. Adam or Donna, the hygienist, will be able to clean all those areas that are difficult to reach. They will also be able to show you the best way to clean your teeth and gums, and show you any areas you may be missing, including your tongue.

Can I prevent bad breath?

To keep your breath fresh, you must get rid of any gum disease, and keep your mouth clean and fresh. If you do have bad breath, try keeping a diary of all the foods you eat and list any medicines you are taking. Take this diary to your dentist who may be able to suggest ways to solve the problem.

Brush your teeth and gums twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste. Don't forget to brush your tongue as well. Use dental floss once a day for cleaning between your teeth. There are other products you can buy to clean between your teeth (they are called 'interdental cleaners'). If you wear dentures, take them out at night to give your mouth chance to rest. Clean them thoroughly with soap and lukewarm water, a denture cream or a denture cleaning tablet. Do not clean them with toothpaste as it will scratch the surface and more stains will build up. They will also lose their shine. Use a



Thank You

Adam and his wife, Natasha, would like to thank everyone for all their kind wishes on the birth of their daughter Abigail, in May.

Continued Overleaf

denture brush kept just for the purpose. Remember to clean the surfaces that fit against your gums and palate. This will make sure your dentures are always fresh and clean, and avoid the plaque build-up on the denture that may cause bad breath.

What products are available?

There are several types of toothpaste you can use; from total care toothpaste to those especially for sensitive teeth. Look for the toothpaste that will suit your needs. If you know that you often get food stuck between your teeth, you may need to brush after every meal. So carry a brush and interdental cleaner with you.

Most mouthwashes only disguise bad breath for a short time. So if you find that you are using a mouthwash all the time, talk to Adam, because he may be able to recommend a mouthwash for you to use.

If you require any further information or advice, please do not hesitate to ask Adam or any of the team at The Dental Centre.

Visiting the Dental Hygienist

At The Dental Centre we now have a dental hygienist. Donna, our new hygienist, 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 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.



*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*

