

# The Rickmansworth Dental Centre

## Newsletter

tel/fax: 01923 777450

e-mail: dentist@thedentalcentre.org

Issue 9, Summer 2003

Welcome to the ninth 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 2003 Newsletter. Hopefully you're reading this while relaxing in the hot sunshine. Whoops! nearly forgot this is a British summer, so you're probably looking out of the window at the rain outside.

As we announced previously, our aim for 2003 is to become a member of the British Dental Association's Good Practice scheme. 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. More details of this can be found at our website (www.thedentalcentre.org) or at the practice. It may take several months to complete all the necessary work to be accepted onto the scheme, and we are gradually getting there, but 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 newsletter. If all goes according to schedule we should be able to announce a date for the start of the project quite soon.

Finally, we hope you like the new water cooler in the waiting room. Please help yourself to a cup of cold water to cool down during the anticipated heatwave!

### Happy Birthday To Us



We have just celebrated our 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday at The Dental Centre. These past three years have been a great success and Adam and the rest of the team would like to take this opportunity to thank all of their patients for this success.

### Appointments



As we are exceptionally busy at the moment, you may find that when making a routine appointment, a convenient time may not be available for 4 weeks. We apologise for this and are trying to rectify the situation as soon as possible. We will still make every effort to see you on the same day in an emergency.

### Dental Hygienist

Donna, our dental hygienist has changed her Monday sessions to Tuesday. She is also in the practice on Thursday mornings. There is information about the hygienist and what she does on the back of this newsletter.



- If the tooth has been weakened by a large filling.
- If you have had an accident and broken or damaged the tooth.
- To protect a tooth that has had a root filling.
- To improve the appearance of the tooth, eg. If you have discoloured fillings.
- To hold a bridge or denture in place.

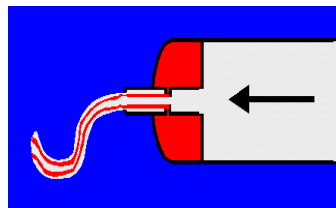
### Stripy Toothpaste!



Keen as we are at The Dental Centre on keeping abreast of important global issues and discussion on the deeper complexities of life, we began wondering how stripy toothpaste gets its' stripes. After hours of research, we thought you might like to know the answer.

The stripes don't appear in the toothpaste until just before it comes out of the nozzle.

There are actually two areas to the inside of the toothpaste tube. One holds the white paste, and the other, smaller area (near the front of the tube) holds the coloured paste (red in the diagram) that gives the stripes. As the white toothpaste is forced from the tube, it passes through a tube that has four small holes in it. These holes let the coloured paste in, and it comes out stripy.



### Focus On Crowns & Bridges



#### What is a crown?

A crown, sometimes known as a cap, is a pre-formed covering that fits right over a tooth that has perhaps been damaged, weakened by decay, or by a very large filling. Some people have them to improve the appearance of their teeth.

#### What is it made of?

Crowns can be made of metal, porcelain, or a combination of the two, designed to look natural and be hard wearing but gentle to the surrounding tissue.

#### Who would need a crown?

You might need a crown:

#### What does fitting it involve?

Dr. Deitsch prepares the tooth to be crowned by shaving off sufficient of the outer surface for the crown to fit neatly over the remaining tooth and to reproduce the correct contour and shape. It may be necessary to build up new foundations and fit a post in a root-filled tooth.

Having shaped the 'core', we take impressions (or moulds) of the teeth, which are sent to the technician to make the plaster casts, on which the crown is then modelled. Also sent are the colours and shades required to match the crown to the other teeth. Meanwhile, a temporary crown is constructed at the chairside and cemented in lightly, enabling us to remove it when fitting the final crown. Some care is needed to avoid dislodging this with sticky foods. At the next appointment, Adam 'tries in' the crown and, if he and patient are satisfied with the fit and the match to the other teeth, the crown is bonded into place.

#### Is the procedure painful?

No, a local anaesthetic is used while the tooth is prepared and it should feel no different from a filling. If the crown is to go over a root canal filling, the tooth has no nerve and an anaesthetic may not be necessary. Once fitted, the crown should feel very much like the original intact tooth, although it may feel slightly strange at first. If it continues to be uncomfortable, it may need adjustment, so ask Dr. Deitsch to check it.

#### What is a bridge?

A bridge is a false tooth fixed to an adjacent natural tooth. It is usually a series of crowns joined together with a false tooth suspended between them. Sometimes it can be a false tooth attached to existing teeth by means of adhesive tabs. There are many designs of bridge for use in different situations. The preparation and procedure used for a bridge is similar to those for a crown, with the teeth either side of the gap

Continued Overleaf

being reduced and crowned and a false tooth of the same materials fixed between them.

#### **How do I care for a crown or bridge?**

A crown or bridge should be cleaned in the same way as natural teeth, though to clean a bridge you may need special miniature bottle brushes or floss handlers to clean under the false tooth. Flossing is particularly important to clean the edge where a brush cannot reach. Dr. Deitsch or Donna, the hygienist will give instructions on cleaning and aftercare.

#### **How long can a crown or bridge be expected to last?**

This depends on the material used, but you can expect a crown to last many years. Problems tend to occur in the surrounding gums and the tooth root, rather than the crown itself and, over time, the appearance of the surrounding teeth may change, making the crown more noticeable. The prime danger to the crown is decay or gum disease occurring where the edge of the crown joins the tooth, so good oral hygiene is very important.

If you require further information on crown or bridgework, please do not hesitate to contact The dental Centre where Adam or any of the staff will be happy to help you.

## **Visiting the Dental Hygienist**

At The Dental Centre we now have a dental hygienist. Donna, our new hygienist, is here on Tuesdays 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.



*Have a great 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)*

