

## A solid foundation



**Ideally, a solid foundation is what everything should be built on. Whether it's a house or your teeth, a firm base is a good place to start.**

We believe good oral health is essential, and achieving this is key before embarking on more advanced forms of dentistry, whether it's implants, crowns and bridges or orthodontic treatment.

Recent research has also shown links between gum disease and heart disease, strokes and diabetes. An exact mechanism of how this happens has not yet been established, but experts know that bacteria can enter the bloodstream through the gums. These bacteria have been found clumped in artery plaques on the inside of artery walls (different from the plaque removed from your teeth!). So one theory is that these bacteria stick to the fatty plaques in the bloodstream, directly contributing to blockages.

Other possibilities lie in the bodies' own defense mechanisms against bacteria. One of the body's natural responses to infection is inflammation, as seen with swollen, red, bleeding gums in gum disease. It's possible that when these bacteria travel through your body, they trigger a similar response, causing swelling in the

vessels. This could then narrow an artery and increase the risk of clots.

To help you achieve and maintain healthy gums, we have a new dedicated hygiene room where Nikki, Ali and Naseema will be available most days to carry out periodontal (gum) care. This means we have a much better range of appointment days and times to allow you to keep to your prescribed hygiene maintenance programme and allow us to monitor your home care.

It is important to attend regular hygiene appointments to prevent progression of gum disease and reduce the risk of losing teeth. It's also worth noting that one of the main causes for the failure of dental implants is inflammation of the gum around the implant (peri-implantitis), so it is just as important to get your bionic teeth cleaned and maintain your home care.

Having three treatment rooms allows greater flexibility for appointments with George, Karim and Dev who are able to attend more frequently, while David continues to be in attendance on a daily basis in his surgery.

## It's never too early

Let's not forget the other benefits of healthy gums. They look better and help your breath smell sweeter too, and it's never too early to start! We are often asked: when is it best to bring young children for their first check up? There is no hard and fast rule as it depends on your child. Some children (particularly those with older siblings) will be ready for their first dental experience between 2 to 3 years old, whereas others may not be ready until they are 4 years old. We would never force the issue, but encourage mums to bring young children when they attend for short appointments, such as simple check ups, to get the children used to the sights, sounds and smells at the dentist first.

We are able to advise you on the best dental products for your children and have advice sheets on encouraging healthy eating habits in the early years as well as home care for your children's teeth.



If you have any questions about any of the articles, please don't hesitate to ask.

Until next time. Keep Smiling!

*David & Naseema*



## Smile Update

### Welcome to our latest newsletter

Welcome to our latest newsletter and welcome back to Ali, our dental therapist, who has returned from maternity leave with renewed vigor (in spite of the sleepless nights having a baby entails!). The rest of us have also had a busy time since our last edition and many of you will have already visited the practice and seen the fruits of our investment.

Do read on to find out more about our new dedicated hygiene room and getting a good start on dental health in the early years.



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Articles contained within this newsletter are provided for information only and should not be taken as a recommendation for any specific dental treatment or procedure. For further advice contact the dental practice.

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## Fun fact

Like your fingerprints, everyone has a unique set of teeth. Even identical twins have different 'dental fingerprints'.



## Keeping you & your family safe

The health and safety of our patients and staff is of the utmost importance, which is why we have such stringent cross-infection controls in place.

We ensure that we meet the strict standards set by the health and adult social care regulators, the Care Quality Commission and the Department of Health guidelines for cross-infection control. These measures include using many single use items, thoroughly sterilising all other instruments, wearing gloves and providing patients with protective eyewear.

So, rest assured, your health and safety and that of your family is of the utmost importance to us.



## The lowdown on tooth brushing

### Why brush?

Brushing your teeth stops the build up of plaque on your teeth. Plaque (a film of bacteria that coats your teeth) contributes to gum disease, tooth decay and is linked to other health problems such as heart disease and diabetes.

### When to brush

You should brush your teeth for two minutes twice a day, last thing at night and on at least one other occasion.

### What to use

Most people find an electric toothbrush more effective and easier to clean their teeth. If you prefer to use a manual brush, we usually recommend that adults choose one that is small to medium sized with soft to medium, round-ended bristles.

Whether manual or electric the brush or brush head needs to be changed every three months or if showing signs of splaying or damage.

### How to brush

Adults should use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste (children half this amount and those under three a smear).

Cover every surface of every tooth (inside, outside and chewing surface) when you brush, especially the gumline.

After brushing spit out any excess toothpaste but don't rinse your mouth with water.

Talk to us about your daily dental health regime. We will be happy to offer advice on the best tools and techniques for you.

## Be mouth aware

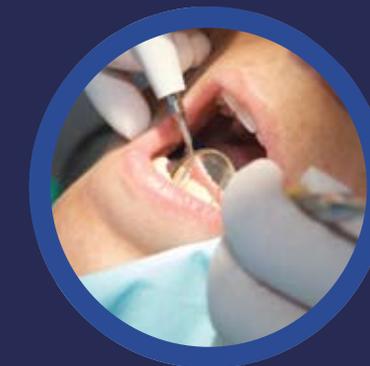
Mouth cancer can affect anyone. Through our lifestyle choices, we can help cut the chances of developing mouth cancer. Here are the risk factors that have been shown to play a major role in contracting the disease:

- ✓ Tobacco
- ✓ Alcohol
- ✓ Poor diet
- ✓ HPV

'If in doubt, get checked out'. Three signs and symptoms not to ignore are:

- Ulcers which don't heal in three weeks
- Red and white patches in the mouth
- Unusual lumps or swelling in the mouth or head and neck area

If you notice any of these symptoms tell your dentist immediately. For more information please visit [www.mouthcancer.org](http://www.mouthcancer.org)



## ORAL HEALTH CARE TIPS

### Do's

- ✓ Brush twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste
- ✓ Clean between your teeth at least once a day (floss or inter-dental brushes are ideal)
- ✓ Try to keep naturally sweet, acidic and sugary foods and drinks to mealtimes only
- ✓ Attend your regular dental check-ups as recommended
- ✓ Rinse your mouth with water after drinking/eating foods that can stain your teeth

### Don'ts

- ✓ Brush your teeth within 30 minutes of consuming acidic food or beverages
- ✓ Use a hard bristled brush or excessive force
- ✓ Smoke