

Sample  
COPY

*Smile!*

MAGAZINE



Straightening my teeth  
changed my life!

.....

ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO  
YOUR WEDDING DAY PICTURES?

.....

**20** TIPS FOR A FRESH,  
HEALTHY MOUTH

• why electric is best • real-life case studies • cure your snoring •



## welcome

...to the first issue of **Smile!** MAGAZINE, the first dental magazine for patients. **Smile!** MAGAZINE has been specially designed to give you all the information and inspiration you need to maintain your oral health and achieve the smile you've always dreamed of. In this first issue, you'll find real-life stories from people whose lives have been transformed by dental treatment alongside informative articles on a wide range of dental topics. So, dive right in and if you want any more information on anything within the magazine, speak to your dentist or a team member and they will be more than happy to help you.

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Address and Contact Details

**Smile!** MAGAZINE

Kempthorne House, Park Avenue, Oswestry, Shropshire SY11 1AY

T : 01691 684151

E : info@smile-mag.co.uk

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## dentistry 'apps' help educate patients

Your mobile phone is now a valuable resource for lots of information and advice about your oral health. The wide range of dental apps that are now available to download onto your mobile phone provide advice on maintaining a healthy mouth, explanations of dental terms and helpful tips on how to find the best dentist for you. What's more, there are a growing number of individual dental practices who are now launching their own apps that give you information on the practice, travel and parking directions and the opportunity to book your appointment on the move. To find out more, search for 'dental apps' via your search engine.



## Tooth decay linked to bowel cancer

The bacteria associated with the most common cause of tooth loss in adults could be a precursor for the development of bowel cancer, according to a team of scientists.

The link comes as scientists at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and the Broad Institute in America found an abnormally large number of Fusobacterium, a bacterium associated with the development of periodontal (gum) disease, in nine colorectal tumour samples, pointing to the possibility the two could be associated.

Bowel cancer, also known as colon cancer, is one of the top three deadly cancers in the UK. Around 35,000 people get diagnosed with bowel cancer every year and around half of them die.

This research is more evidence of the systemic links between oral health and overall health

Although lead author Matthew Meyerson, MD, PhD, co-director of the Center for Cancer Genome Discovery at Dana-Farber and a professor of pathology at Harvard Medical School, believes further research is needed to discover the extent of the link, the research suggests the bacterium could be a factor in the development of cancer.

Dr Meyerson stated: "At this point, we don't know what the connection between Fusobacterium and colon cancer might be. It may be that the bacterium is essential for cancer growth, or that cancer simply provides a hospitable environment for the bacterium. Further research is needed to see what the link is."

Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation, Dr Nigel Carter, believes the research further highlights the importance of good oral health.

Dr Carter said: "This research, although at an early stage, is more evidence of the systemic links between oral and overall health. Everyone suffers from gum disease at some point in their lives, which could potentially endanger thousands of people if they persist in neglecting their oral health.

"If you have swollen gums that bleed regularly when brushing, bad breath, loose teeth or regular mouth infections appear, it is likely you have gum disease. To avoid further deterioration in your oral health, visit your dentist for a thorough check-up and clean."

## TURN OFF THE TAP!

and turn on to saving water



**MILLIONS OF PEOPLE ACROSS THE UK LEAVE THE TAP RUNNING WHILST BRUSHING THEIR TEETH, WASTING AN AVERAGE OF 3.5 LITRES OF WATER EACH TIME. IF YOU BRUSH YOUR TEETH TWICE A DAY, THAT'S 7 LITRES OF WASTED WATER. MULTIPLY THAT BY A FAMILY OF FOUR (28 LITRES A DAY) AND OVER A YEAR YOU ARE LOOKING AT OVER 10,000 LITRES OF WASTED WATER...FOR JUST ONE HOUSEHOLD! WE ALL HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO SAVE WATER, SO PLEASE, WHEN YOU BRUSH YOUR TEETH, TURN THE TAP OFF.**



## Did you know?

The first commercial shown on TV in Britain was for Gibbs S R Toothpaste and was transmitted at 8.12 pm on September 22nd 1955 during a variety show hosted by Jack Jackson.

Viewers saw a tube of toothpaste embedded in a block of ice and a woman called Meg Smith brushing her teeth in the approved manner, "Up and down and round the gums." The immaculate tones of Alex Macintosh delivered the newly-minted slogan: "It's tingling fresh. It's fresh as ice. It's Gibbs SR toothpaste."

The commercial owed its prime placing to chance. The Gibbs advertisement had come first in a lottery drawn with 23 other advertisements, including those for Guinness, Surf, National Benzole, Brown & Polson Custard and Summer County Margarine.



## National Smile Month... The UK's BIGGEST smiling event!

National Smile Month is an oral health campaign like no other! Occurring annually around May and June, at its most basic level, the campaign promotes three key messages, all of which go a long way to improve oral health in the UK. They are:

- Brush your teeth for two minutes twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste
- Cut down on how often you have sugary foods and drinks
- Visit your dentist regularly, as often as they recommend.

The campaign is the focal point for thousands of dental and health professionals to coordinate events and activities across the UK to improve oral health. Community groups, businesses, schools and members of the public also help to organise grass-roots activities such as fun days, talks, sponsored events, displays, open sessions and competitions. These events form the back-bone of the campaign and help to share the proven messages and importance of good oral health.

Organised by the UK's leading oral health charity, the British Dental Health Foundation, National Smile Month will take place between May 20th and June 20th in 2012. For more information and to find out how your company or school can get involved, go to: [www.nationalsmilemonth.org](http://www.nationalsmilemonth.org)



# SMILE!

THE FUTURE'S BRIGHT AND WHITE! IF YOU'RE OVER THE AGE OF THIRTY, YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED THAT DENTISTRY HAS CHANGED SOMEWHAT OVER THE PAST TWO DECADES. THERE WAS A TIME, NOT SO LONG AGO THAT, FOR MOST OF US, DENTISTRY WAS ABOUT A TWICE YEARLY VISIT, A FIVE MINUTE SIT IN THE CHAIR WITH OUR FINGERS CROSSED, WITH THE HOPE WE'D GET AWAY WITHOUT THE NEED FOR A FILLING. BUT SINCE THAT TIME, THINGS HAVE CHANGED A LOT...AND FOR THE BETTER...

*The awareness of dentistry has greatly increased in recent years partly down to programmes such as 'Ten Years Younger', presented by Nicky Hambleton-Jones (left) and high profile celebrity makeovers like Cheryl Cole (below).*



In 2006, the Government changed the NHS contract that was offered to dentists and many, dissatisfied with the new terms, saw it as the catalyst to move from NHS to private dentistry. As such, there are many more private dental practices now than there were just a few years ago. This fundamental shift also coincided with a massive increase in public awareness of dentistry driven in part by television makeover programmes such as 'Ten Years Younger'. We now even have 'celebrity dentists' - who would have thought that?

These changes, coupled with a greater public awareness, have brought many positives to dentistry:

#### Oral health

Despite the high profile sometimes given to cosmetic dentistry, oral health remains the absolute key priority for dentists across the UK - as it should be for patients. A healthy mouth gives you the confidence to interact with friends, family and colleagues without worrying about things like bad breath. But research is showing that maintaining your oral health has even more importance than previously thought. Poor oral health has been linked with heart disease, bowel cancer and, of course, mouth cancer. Research is still on-going, and the exact cause of the links has yet to be fully understood, but the message is clear - by looking after your mouth, you are looking after your whole body's health.

#### More knowledge, more options

The relationship between dentists and patients is also changing. There is now a growing acceptance and understanding that patients need to be educated and informed about the best options open to them. This means dentists and hygienists are finding more time than ever before to listen to patient concerns and wishes and explaining (in simple terms) the best ways forward. And, it seems, as patients, we are taking the time ourselves to find out more - The British Dental Health Foundation's website currently attracts 3500 visitors...a day!

#### Dentistry for everyone

More and more people are waking up to the fact that having a great looking, healthy smile is something that impacts positively on their whole personality and approach to life. As such, dentistry is moving to the top of many people's wish lists as something they can do for themselves. There has been a huge upsurge in people in their 40s, 50s, even 60s and 70s opting to invest in the health and appearance of their smile.

#### Reducing the fear factor

There was a time, when a visit to the dentist was akin to entering a torture chamber...but not any more. Not only are the environments more friendly and welcoming, dentists now have a range of products and approaches that help to reduce fear and anxiety in most patients. So there really is nothing to fear.

*Dental practices are becoming more design-led and customer focused like this one in Germany*

#### Be healthy AND look great!

Perhaps the biggest change in dentistry in recent years has been the rise and rise of cosmetic dentistry. It seems that we British have finally woken up to the fact that having straight, white teeth is achievable and is a fundamental part of your overall image. Smile makeovers are hugely popular, made easier by the fact that much of the work can now be carried out without many of your friends and family even noticing, through the introduction of invisible braces and other technological advances.

Then, of course, there's the rise in popularity of tooth whitening. A simple and easy procedure that can deliver stunning results.

#### It's not just your teeth and gums!

It's a little known fact that many dentists are now offering a much wider range of services than simply looking after your teeth and gums. Snoring remedies, help with migraines, 'quit smoking' programmes and even beauty treatments like BOTOX® are all now commonly offered by your dentist.

#### Customer service

As dentistry enters the mainstream, it has had to wake up to the fact that it's now firmly seen as a service provider and, as such, is judged by patients not just by the quality of the dental work, but also by the whole customer journey. Patients are consumers and they expect high standards and great service every time. This has led to a customer service revolution in dentistry. Dentists are paying much more attention to serving patients and are investing in practices that are great places to visit, with comfortable waiting areas, easy parking, treatment coordination rooms and a warm and friendly welcome. Dentistry is also moving into new areas: there is currently a large rise in dental practices located within supermarkets.

So, there you have it. It's an exciting time for dentistry, which can only mean good news for you, the patient. So, take the time to chat with your dentist and team and find out just how they can help you achieve top oral health and the look you've always wished for.

*BOTOX® is a registered trademark of Allergan, Inc.*



# Beauty is in the smile of the beholder

Your face is your window to the world. Yet for many people, embarrassed by crooked or dull teeth, it's something they want to hide away. A smile makeover can not only transform your smile, but in many cases also your whole outlook on life. Cherrelle Slater has recently been crowned Miss Bury, and it was her smile makeover that gave her the confidence to go for it...

"One of my friends had entered a beauty contest years ago and I thought it would be really interesting to do something similar. But ever since high school, I'd been conscious of my teeth and my smile. My two front teeth overlapped and I had a very prominent 'fang' on one side of my mouth. Some people would say that it wasn't something that was that bad, but it really affected my confidence and I was very self-conscious in social situations.

I suppose everybody has something about themselves that they don't like or would want to change and with me it was my teeth. If someone got a camera out, I would turn my face to one side so that my 'fang' was not showing and I'd also try and smile on one side. As a result, I never liked seeing myself in pictures, I always thought my smile was very lopsided...I just hated it!

In the end, I decided to try and do something about it. A friend of mine recommended a dentist that specialised in smile makeovers and cosmetic dentistry, so I made an appointment.

I was a bit nervous at first as I didn't quite know what to expect, but the dentist was great, very friendly and approachable and he immediately understood what my concerns were. He carried out an examination and took the time to go through all of the options open to me and explained them in a language that was easy to understand. I was immediately drawn to a treatment programme that takes just six months. I thought that was a time frame I could live with - I didn't want to be in braces for a longer period of time.

The treatment didn't hurt beyond a dull ache for a day or two when the tramlines were first applied. I had to go back a few times over the six months to have the braces tightened and in the end, I was really pleased to get the result I'd set out to achieve. The treatment straightened my two front teeth and pushed the fang back.

Some people think that it's a small thing I had done, but the difference it's made has been huge. I can now smile with confidence and I'm generally a lot happier interacting with people without being self-conscious or trying to hide it.

Of course, with the beauty shows, smiling is really important and the treatment has massively boosted my self-esteem, culminating with me winning the Miss Bury competition in 2011.

Now that I've won Miss Bury, I feel like I've achieved what I set out to do. I'm now really interested in developing my skills in a wider capacity so that I can forge a longer term career. The treatment has helped open doors for me work wise and if I were to give any advice to other young women who are unhappy with their smile, it would definitely be to be positive and proactive and ask your dentist to see what your options are. I was surprised that I could sort my issues out in such a short space of time."



Left: Cherrelle carrying out her duties as Miss Bury.  
Below: Before her dental treatment showing her unsightly 'fang'



I used to hide if I saw a camera...but not any more!

## Next steps to your perfect smile

1. Ask your dentist about smile makeovers and get all the information you need to make an informed decision
2. If you are serious about going ahead, your dentist will carry out a full examination and provide you with a fully-costed treatment plan
3. Ask your dentist about finance options, which could help you spread the cost of treatment. More and more dentists are now offering this facility

# Dental Facts & figures

With your support, National Smile Month, which takes place every year, reaches around 50 million people and is the biggest and most effective annual reminder of the importance of good oral health. But there is still more work to do.

A third of all children starting school have tooth decay. Around a quarter of all adults say they have not visited a dentist in the past two years. Three in every ten adults suffer from regular dental pain. A quarter of adults don't brush their teeth twice a day and over four-fifths of the population have at least one filling.

Poor oral health doesn't just cause problems inside the mouth. A smile is hugely important to our personalities, self-confidence, relationships and success. General health is at risk too as studies continue to associate poor oral health with serious health problems such as diabetes, heart disease, strokes, pneumonia, premature babies and other major conditions. With a good oral health routine, most of these conditions are preventable and your support during National Smile Month can make a big difference.

The following information gives a snapshot of the nation's oral health. The information is useful to help you decide your priorities and who you would like to help during National Smile Month 2012.

## Reasons for visiting the dentist

- 27 per cent of adults only visit their dentist when they have a problem
- 9 per cent of adults visit their dentist with pain
- 90 per cent of visits to the dentist are for check-ups

The UK is one of the most likely nations in Europe to visit their dentist for a check-up – ranked second (72%), after the Netherlands (79%).

Teeth/smiles are rated the second most important attraction feature, after personality, and the most important body feature surveyed (including body shape, height, hair, face and eyes).

## Brushing twice a day

- 25 per cent of adults don't brush twice a day, including a third of men
- People who only brush once a day are a third more likely to develop tooth decay

## Cleaning habits

- 42 per cent of adults use just a toothbrush and toothpaste for their oral care
- 31 per cent of adults use mouthwash
- 21 per cent of adults use dental floss

## Visits to the dentist

- 50 per cent of adults say they visit their dentist every 6 months
- 21 per cent of adults say they visit their dentist annually
- Visiting the dentist annually reduces the risk of tooth decay by 60 per cent
- Nearly one in ten people in the UK aren't registered with a dentist

## Which dentist?

- 70 per cent of adults use the NHS for their dental care
- 27 per cent of adults use a private dentist
- 32 per cent of those use a private dentist because they can't find an NHS one

## Tooth loss and dentures

- 6 per cent of adults have no natural teeth
- 74 per cent of all adults have had a tooth extracted
- 19 per cent of adults have full or partial dentures

## Fillings and other treatments

- 84 per cent of all adults have at least one or more fillings
- Each adult has an average of 7 fillings

## Children's oral health

- Over three in every ten children starting school (31 per cent) have tooth decay
- A third of children aged 12 have visible dental decay

## Affordability

- 88 per cent of adults have no dental insurance
- 63 per cent of adults use NHS dentists for cost reasons
- 19 per cent of adults have delayed their treatment due to cost
- 26 per cent of adults said cost has an effect on the type of dental treatment they opt for
- 19 per cent said that they had delayed dental treatment for the same reason

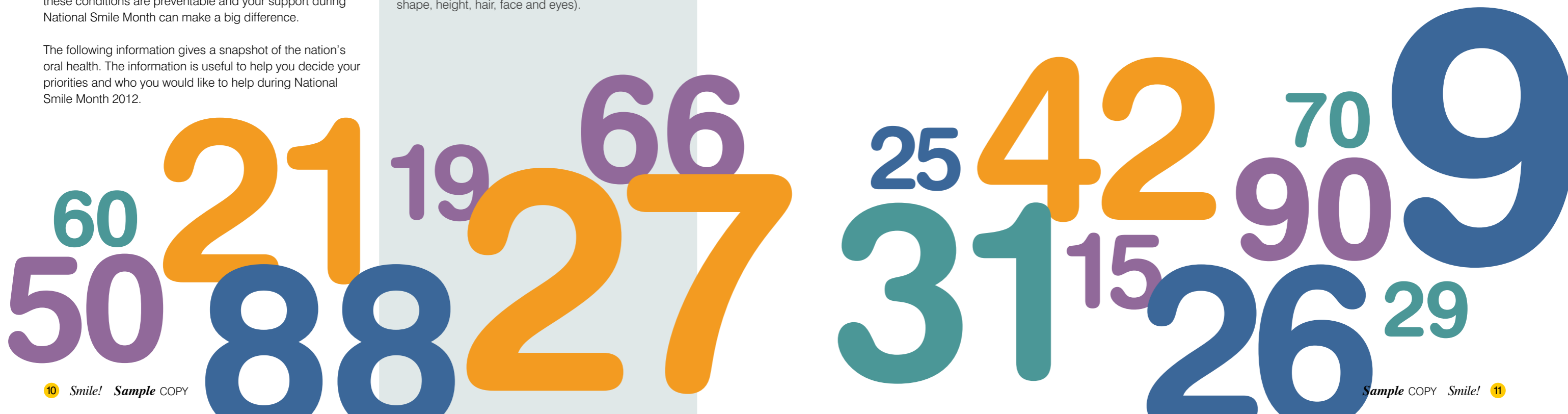
## Dental phobia

- 15 per cent of adults who have been to a dentist suffer from extreme dental anxiety

## Other oral health indicators

31 per cent of adults have tooth decay  
66 per cent of adults have visible plaque  
29 per cent of adults suffer from regular dental pain

Visiting the dentist is ranked number one (22%) for making people nervous, closely followed by heights (19%). Nearly 10 times as many people (22%) are nervous of visiting their dentists, compared to their doctor (2%).





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### Experience the difference of a Sonicare clean mouth feeling.

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Find out more at [www.lovetheifference.co.uk](http://www.lovetheifference.co.uk) ♥ LOVE THE DIFFERENCE

**PHILIPS**  
**sonicare**  
sense and simplicity

# Why **electric** is best for your teeth

Giving your mouth the care and attention it deserves can really pay off. While it doesn't mean you should say goodbye to the dentist's surgery forever, using an electric toothbrush can help remove more plaque and prevent the development of gum disease, such as gingivitis.

Electric toothbrushes have high-powered bristles that dislodge and remove more plaque faster and more thoroughly than manual toothbrushes. Over recent years, electric toothbrushes have become more advanced. The British Dental Journal and the British Dental Health Foundation both strongly advocate the use of electric toothbrushes for improved overall oral health. General advice is that brushing twice a day for a minimum of two minutes will help maintain a healthy mouth, but most people don't brush for this long. Many electric toothbrushes now have a built-in two minute timer function to help.

There is more evidence than ever to show that oral health is linked to overall health and wellbeing. Often, issues with your oral health can be an indicator of, or even more importantly, directly affect, your overall health. For instance, some conditions, such as diabetes, require that you pay special attention to your teeth and gums in order to better maintain your health. Brushing twice a day with an electric toothbrush and flossing once a day helps prevent tooth decay and gum disease.

Whichever toothbrush you use, it's important to use the brush correctly. Use a pea sized amount of toothpaste on your brush, place the head of your toothbrush against your teeth, then tilt the bristle tips to a 45 degree angle against the gum line. Make sure you pay extra attention to the hard-to-reach teeth at the back and areas around any dental work.

### Electric toothbrushes have many advantages over conventional brushes

- *Cleans more thoroughly than conventional toothbrushes*
- *More economical in the long run*
- *Gives more control and encourages longer brushing time*





Sample COPY

**T**hroughout his teenage years, Tom Mills was so wrapped up in his sport and social life, he neglected to look after his teeth. Gradually the decay set in and so did the pain. By the time he went to university, it had become unbearable and he decided it was time to sort things out. Here, he tells his story...

Unfortunately, I didn't pay the best attention to my teeth when I was younger. And when things started to go wrong it spiralled and got worse and worse and worse. I was obviously very aware that my teeth didn't look very good, however my biggest driver to getting things sorted was because I was absolutely sick of the pain. It had got to the point where it was unbearable at times. But when I looked into what treatment I needed, I decided that if I was going to put things right, I was going to go all the way and try to end up with a result that was aesthetically pleasing as well as ending the pain I was in.

The problem that I had was that I was suffering from advanced tooth decay. My teeth had started breaking and I hadn't heeded the warning signs and things went downhill very rapidly. It started with a standard toothache - I could live with it, but it hurt. But as it progressed the pain just grew and grew and I remember one particular day I was in so much pain I felt like putting my head through a window. Funnily enough, I played cricket that day and it was the only time I've ever batted without a helmet. I think, subconsciously, I was hoping the ball would hit me in the mouth and knock all my teeth out! It was around that time that I just said to myself, 'enough is enough'.

As I started to pay attention and look into possible solutions, I realised that apart from the pain, the look of my teeth was having a big effect on me, albeit subconsciously for a long time. I'd started to smile out of one side of my mouth and I was also mumbling a lot when I spoke, in an effort not to open my mouth.

I was a little apprehensive when I first went to the dentist, but the desire to get things sorted had become so strong I knew I'd have to go through some short-term pain to get to the huge gain at the end of the treatment.

I think my dentist was a little surprised at just how much work needed doing for someone that was only in their early twenties. But he was very reassuring and I actually thought he viewed my case as a bit of a challenge that appealed to him in a professional capacity.

Many people, including myself, have some preconceived ideas of what a dentist will be like, but I couldn't have been more wrong. He was very empathetic and explained all my options to me. It was also clear that he was passionate about what he did. I really felt that he had my best interests at heart throughout the whole process.

The first priority was to make things healthy. So teeth that were decayed were either extracted or re-built and once we had got everything to a healthy state, that's when the cosmetic side of the treatment started, which involved a combination of implants and veneers. In all, the treatment took about five months, but that involved two appointments a week for most of that time.

When the treatment was finished my first emotion was one of huge relief, coupled with a little apprehension that the pain might return. But after a week or so, when it sank in that the pain had gone, it really was a whole new world. I could smile and laugh with confidence. Family and friends have said to me that it's made a massive difference to the way I smile and behave, and, even though I think I've always been an outgoing kind of person, the treatment has given me the confidence to express myself far more freely.

It's also had a big impact on my job. I'm far more enthusiastic and can engage with people much more effectively.

Whilst I'm hugely relieved and pleased with the results, I do have some regrets that I allowed my teeth to get into such a state. I only blame myself, my parents drummed into me the importance of looking after my teeth from a young age and I chose to ignore that advice. But if I were to give any advice to any other young people, it would definitely be to take the care of your teeth and oral health seriously. It's not a difficult thing to do, you just have to find a few minutes each day and you could avoid the problems that I've had to deal with. Also, get to a dentist the moment you start having problems because it's unbelievable how quickly things can deteriorate.

# PAIN-FREE

...at last!

*"If I had any advice to give to teenagers, it would be to look after your teeth. It's so simple to do, you just need to make the time"*



Above : Pictures taken before and after Tom's treatment.



Are you looking forward to your wedding photographs?

Sample COPY

...if not, there's still time to get the beautiful white wedding you deserve!

Without a shadow of a doubt, your wedding day is one of the biggest, most special and happiest days of your life. And, of course, these days it will be captured in high resolution by your wedding photographer, by many of your guests and probably on video as well. Naturally, everyone will want to see your dress, but the most important thing you'll be wearing on the big day is...your smile! Your smile will light up the day and your photographs, so it's important that you look and feel fantastic.

So that gives you plenty of time to achieve the smile you want for when the big day arrives.

You'll find that many dentists are now offering special wedding day packages that provide excellent value for money, from full smile makeovers for the bride and groom to teeth whitening for groups including the bride, bride's mother and all the bridesmaids.

You could also take the opportunity of having old fillings replaced with new white ones.

That's why more and more brides (and grooms) are adding their dentist to their list of dressmaker, photographer, caterer, florist and hairdresser as a key contributor to the look and success of their big day.

Whatever your choice, your dentist will be able to advise on your best course of treatment. However, as with everything to do with your wedding, the earlier you start planning, the more you can achieve. So, ask your dentist about how you can get the perfect smile for your big day and going forward into married life.

Most weddings these days are planned well ahead, sometimes up to two years in advance.

### Your Wedding

You want to feel and look your best on your wedding day. Your dentist can help you make the most of your big day in a variety of ways.

- ♥ Teeth straightening and smile makeovers  
*Minimum 6 months' notice*
- ♥ Teeth whitening and white fillings
- ♥ Hygienist visits for the bride, bridesmaids and, of course, the bride's mother
- ♥ Full consultations and healthchecks

Ask at reception for further details and offers.





### Here's what your hygiene visits can do for you...

- Thoroughly clean and polish your teeth, removing all the plaque and bacteria that causes bad breath.
- Give you expert tips and advice to help you radiate a healthy smile.
- Reduce your risk of decay and gum disease and the health risks associated with bleeding gums - heart disease, stroke and pancreatic cancer.
- Work with your dentist to identify future oral health needs.
- Help your existing crowns and fillings to last longer.
- Help reduce your need for future dental treatment (and your bills!).

For more information or to make an appointment, speak to the reception team at your practice

# Your hygiene visit is THE key to lasting oral health

Ask many dentists and they will tell you that when it comes to maintaining the oral health of patients, it's the hygienist, not the dentist who is the most important person in their practice. Yet many patients still don't make an appointment to see their hygienist when they visit their dentist.

#### What is a dental hygienist and what do hygienists do?

A dental hygienist is a specially trained professional who works with your dentist to provide specialist care to help you maintain your oral health and prevent decay (in many practices, this work is carried out by the dentist). They will work with you to ensure your teeth and gums are kept healthy and fresh through a mixture of treatment at the practice and advice and guidance on how you can keep up the good work at home.

Prevention is better than cure. Gum disease can be detected and treated in its very early stages by careful monitoring and regular examinations by the dental hygienist. More advanced gum disease can, in many cases, be prevented by good homecare advice from the hygienist. Your dental hygienist is highly skilled in removing the hard deposits, tartar or calculus and stains, and in cases where more advanced gum disease has developed, can help maintain gum health by removing the sticky film the harmful bacteria thrive in below the gum line, out of reach of the toothbrush.

Another important role of the hygienist is to work with you to show you the best way to keep your teeth free of plaque. Plaque is a sticky coating that forms constantly on your teeth and can lead to dental decay.

*many people visit the dentist but choose not to see their hygienist, which means they're only getting half the support they require*

Of course, there are many factors that affect your oral health and your hygienist will also give you advice on your diet, and recommend and provide help on other preventive measures like giving up smoking. They will also show you how to clean between your teeth with interdental brushes, floss or tape. Regular visits and advice will help build your confidence in keeping your mouth healthy and drastically reduce the chances of you suffering from decay or other dental problems in the future.

There are many oral care products now available including specialist toothpastes, powered toothbrushes and mouthwashes. Your hygienist will recommend those that are best for you.

**Of course, from a patient's perspective, the best thing about visiting your hygienist is that after your visit, your teeth feel clean and fresh and you feel fantastic!**



# snoring...

is it ruining your night's sleep,  
your marriage, your life?



## Snoring Facts...

There are 15 million snorers in the UK. 4.5 million of them are women.

Snoring sounds range from 50dB to 100dB - equivalent to a pneumatic drill!

Over one third of partners report disharmony within their relationship due to snoring.

The three main reasons for snoring are: being overweight, smoking and drinking alcohol.

Snorers are three times more likely to suffer adverse health conditions than non-snorers.

Some call it an inconvenience; some call it irksome. Be you a self-confessed snorer or a poor sufferer of someone else's symptoms, for as long as there have been records, snoring has been a curse on good sleep.

Take the Carr family, for example. A quiet, unassuming family from Daytona Beach, USA, in 1948 the Carr family were so plagued by their neighbour's snoring they felt forced to take him to court for 'disturbance of the peace'.

In his closing remarks to the court, the judge described the accused man's snoring as: 'Both loud and unusual: one might even say tumultuous'. Regardless of the disturbance it was causing however, the judge found favour with the accused, decided the snoring was not wilful, or indeed malicious. As such he concluded: 'A private citizen may snore with immunity in his own home, even though he may be in possession of unusual and exceptional natural ability in that particular field.'

But the problem of snoring doesn't just extend to petty disputes between neighbours – it can even affect family life and can lead to divorce!

In a quite remarkable story, the May 11, 1951 edition of the Lewiston Morning Tribune featured the headline 'Hubby Breaks Snoring Habit, But Wife Won't Have Him'. The news story featured one Richard Michalak, a 25-year-old egg inspector whose wife, Florence, claimed Richard's night noises 'had wrecked her health'. In an attempt to save their marriage, Richard is said to have pored over more than 500 suggested cures for snoring, and even though he did claim to have found one, his young wife still wouldn't take him back.

Whilst these two stories are perhaps amusing examples of snoring in the news, there is in fact quite a serious matter underpinning both these items: namely, that snoring really does have a dramatic impact on people's lives.

Whilst we may laugh at examples of snoring leading to divorce, it is actually the number one medical cause for divorce and is cited

as the third most frequent cause of divorce between couples behind financial problems and infidelity.

Snoring is generally due to the partial closure of the airway. During sleep, muscles in the neck relax and for some people the soft tissue in the upper throat vibrates, which generates the sound which we recognise as snoring.

But snoring can also be much more than just an annoying noise for bed partners and those within earshot. Loud and chronic snoring, particularly that which is punctuated by periods of silence and loud snorts and gasps can be an indication of a more serious underlying problem of Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA).

Where snoring is due to partial closure of the airway, in the case of OSA sufferers, the periods of silence signal that the airway has closed completely. This can happen on many occasions during sleep and for several seconds each time, starving the body of the oxygen which is needed for a refreshing night's sleep. The tiredness and poor concentration that naturally follow a broken night's sleep are the most dangerous of the many side effects of OSA and it is estimated that sufferers are seven times more likely to have an accident while driving than non-sufferers.

Whilst most GPs might only suggest losing weight, reducing smoking and drinking and avoiding sleeping on one's back to people presenting with a snoring complaint, many dentists have undergone specific training in the provision of snoring treatment. These dentists are now on the front-line of the battle against snoring and OSA, and with the help of specialist dental products, can offer solutions to snoring and mild/moderate Obstructive Sleep Apnoea.

*So, don't let snoring ruin your life, ask your dentist for more information on how you can cure your snoring...or that of your partner!*

# A SMILE RETURNED

A Design Technology teacher and keen motorcyclist for over thirty years, Bill Harrison's life was turned upside down four years ago when a car turned directly in front of him and he collided with it at 60mph. He broke his pelvis, his wrist and lost seven of his teeth...but he survived. And now, with the help of his dentist, he's smiling with confidence once more. Here, Bill describes his journey back to full oral health.

*“it's important to know what you want to achieve, I didn't want gleaming, straight, white teeth...I just wanted my old smile back”*

I started motorcycling when I was sixteen and rode big powerful motorcycles for sixteen years but gave it up when I got married and the children came along.

However, when the children had grown up, I decided to get back into motorcycling and bought a 1150cc BMW motorbike which I absolutely loved. In the year before my accident I rode over 23,000 miles, riding for work and pleasure. Then I changed the bike to a beautiful 1200cc new BMW tourer and seven weeks later I had my crash. I was on my way to Warrington with a friend who was a little way behind me. I was travelling along an 'A' road when a lady parked in a layby who was signalling to turn left, suddenly turned right and I hit her broadside at 60mph. I don't remember anything of the accident, but my friend tells me that I was thrown over the car (had it been a van, I would certainly have died). I fractured my pelvis, badly broke my right wrist and also had extensive damage to my mouth, which resulted in seven teeth needing to be replaced.

Once I was out of hospital I went to see my dentist who, in the first instance made me a temporary plastic plate, which I had to glue in on a daily basis which wasn't pleasant. The legal and insurance process was painfully slow and took over 18 months to resolve. My dentist, however, was fantastic, he took a lot of time examining my mouth, taking x-rays and weighing up the best options for me, and at the end of that process we both agreed that the best solution would be implants. In fact, we decided to use two implants, one on either side of my mouth as posts that would be used to support an upper dental plate.

The dental treatment started as soon as I got an advancement from my insurance company. I had a CAT scan to ascertain that my jaw bone was strong enough to take the implants. The work was done jointly by an implant specialist and my own dentist. The implant procedure itself was very much like having a filling, perfectly straightforward and easy.

Once the implants were done, I came back to my own dentist and we decided on chromium-cobalt dentures because they're very thin and light and they don't fill up your mouth. The plate clicks in and out very easily, so if I'm out and get something lodged under the plate, it's a very quick process to pop somewhere private and remove and clean the plate.

The actual dental work took over six months, which was entirely appropriate because there was a huge amount involved in terms of bedding-in times, setting times, integration times and models that had to be cast and made. But I was prepared to put up with that because I had total confidence that my dentist would not accept anything less than the best result he could possibly achieve. The specialist denture technician within the practice was also brilliant.

I was very clear what I wanted and what I didn't want - I didn't want gleaming, straight, white teeth that drew people's attention, I didn't want big tombstones in the middle of my face, I wanted my own original, slightly crooked, off-white teeth. The test for me was meeting people that I had not met for a while and them not being able to tell that I'd had any work done on my teeth. And, I have to say, I was utterly delighted with the outcome. It's helped me face the world with confidence again, to the point where it is something I now hardly think about during each day. However, I would say that each morning when I put my denture plate in, I think how fortunate I am to have had such a good solution available to me. I've never once had to go back to my dentist with any problems whatsoever. I now feel I have a set of teeth that will stay with me for the rest of my life.

I've now given up riding motorcycles, but a little while ago I asked a friend of mine to let me ride pillion on his bike, just to see if I could get back on a bike. He agreed and took me out, but when we stopped my legs had seized up and I had to be lifted off the bike, and that's when I realised my motorcycling days were over, but I have some fantastic memories of the people I have met and places I have visited on my motorcycle.

*Below: Bill on his BMW motorbike.*

*Right: The bike after Bill's accident, which was a complete write-off.*



## What are implants?

*A dental implant is used to support one or more false teeth. It is a titanium screw that can replace the root of a tooth when it fails. Just like a tooth root, it is placed into the jawbone.*

*Implants are a safe, well-established, tried-and-tested treatment and, if well looked after, and if the bone they are fitted to is strong and healthy, you can expect them to last for many years.*

*Your dentist will be happy to explain more about implants.*



## How **mouthwash** can improve your oral health

Your saliva breaks down carbohydrates into sugars, which the germs in your mouth love. As they feed on the sugar, the germs begin to multiply - again and again. Germs, by the way, are the cause of most of the problems you have in your mouth: bad breath, tooth decay, gum disease and sometimes even sensitivity.

They also build up into a thick layer called plaque which can build up into a hard rough surface called tartar. Tartar attracts discolourants like coffee, causing staining of the teeth.

Germs can be nasty little things. They get everywhere - on your tongue, gums and even on the roof of your mouth. Left to their own devices, they can develop into plaque. Your teeth only make up 25% of your mouth, so no matter how well you brush, you simply can't get rid of all the germs in your mouth.

That's where mouthwash can help. Mouthwash has the ability to reach the whole mouth, and cleans deeper into those hard-to-reach places than brushing alone.

### **Going beyond brushing**

A recent study that examined plaque reduction over a six-month period showed that the addition of flossing to daily brushing reduced the amount of plaque in the mouth by an additional 9%. Brushing, flossing and using a proven mouthwash twice a day, reduced plaque by a massive 52% more than brushing and flossing alone.

Plaque biofilm - dental plaque - is the main cause of gum disease. Plaque formation begins immediately after brushing. Many mouthwashes have antibacterial effects against a wide range of species of germs - killing them by disrupting their cell walls and inhibiting their ability to multiply.

# GET FRESH!

**Just think what your mouth has to deal with for a minute or two...** food, drink, pens, pencils, pen lids, fingernails, hair grips, toothbrushes, thumbs, hair, coffee stirrers, reading glasses - the list of things you put into your mouth on a daily basis goes on and on *and* on. And every single one of them can carry bacteria - even healthy things like fruit. Using mouthwash, along with your normal brushing and flossing routine, can help to keep your mouth fresh and clean.

Used in conjunction with brushing and flossing your teeth, mouthwashes can help to maintain your oral health by:

- *Killing bacteria in hard to reach places in your mouth*
- *Keeping your breath fresh*
- *Keeping your teeth white*
- *Protecting the enamel on your teeth.*





“I'm a bit obsessive about my teeth and was determined to get the best result possible”



Mairead Sloan is an ambitious businesswoman with her own hairdressing and beauty salon. She works in an environment where image and looking good is very important. Unhappy with the look and colour of her teeth, she thought about having veneers, but her dentist had other ideas.

“I've been in hairdressing pretty much since I left school, having worked part-time in a salon for a friend of my mother's. When I left school, I took my hairdressing NVQs and once qualified I worked for a while in a salon in the UK. I then went off to Sydney, Australia where I worked for a few years, which was very exciting and a great experience. When I returned to the UK in 2008, I set up my own hairdressing and beauty salon called 'HeadKase' and went into running my own business.

want to destroy my perfectly healthy teeth, so preferred a treatment that would not affect the teeth themselves. As a result, he recommended treatment using dental composites. The composites are built up on the existing teeth and then shaped and moulded to make them look natural.

As well as having the composite work, I also had my teeth whitened. Something that I'd been thinking of for quite a while.

Obviously, when running a hair and beauty salon, it's important to project a certain type of image that is in line with customer expectations. I've always been a very confident and out-going person but there were certain aspects of my teeth that I wasn't happy with - they were a little crooked at the front and I wanted them to be straighter. Then about a year or so ago, I chipped one of my front teeth and became even more self-conscious, that's when I decided to do something about it. I was also not that happy with the brightness of my teeth overall. There are a lot of mirrors where I work, so I perhaps noticed what was wrong more than others.

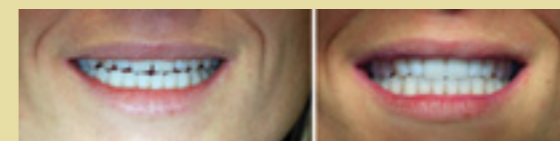
I'm really pleased with the results. I've now got the smile that I wanted, I feel much happier in myself and much more confident in dealing with lots of customers on a day-to-day basis. It's amazing how the look of your smile can become such a big issue. But then again, when you are talking with people it's your eyes and your mouth they look at the most, so you want to feel confident in the way you look.

I'd happily recommend the composite treatment I've had. It can easily be removed and replaced if necessary and I have the peace of mind that my original teeth have not been damaged in any way as a result.”

A friend of mine recommended a good dentist and I went along to see him. I had it in my mind that I would need veneers to sort the chip and help me get straighter teeth. My dentist explained that veneers could be used (the porcelain covers the whole of the front of the tooth with a thicker section replacing the broken part), but he also told me that it would involve removing some of the shiny outer enamel surface of the tooth to make sure that the veneer could be bonded permanently in place. He told me that my teeth were generally in a very good state and that he did not

### About composites

**Composite filling materials are a type of plastic resin, which comes in a variety of tooth coloured shades, and are used for the bulk of white fillings we are all familiar with. Modern chemistry allows the composite material to bond to undamaged enamel, so a result like Mairead's can be achieved without drilling or anaesthetic. Skillful combining of different shades of composite and colour tints can produce beautiful lifelike results with no damage to your dentition.**



Above : Pictures taken before and after Mairead's treatment.

# Whiten up!

For years it was something that was the domain of Hollywood stars and mega-famous footballers, but now a dazzling white smile is available to everyone. What's more it's simple and quick. Here we answer the most common questions people ask about tooth whitening...

## What is tooth whitening?

Tooth whitening can be a very effective way of lightening the natural colour of your teeth without removing any of the tooth surface. It cannot make a complete colour change, but it may lighten the existing shade.

## Why would I need my teeth whitened?

There are a number of reasons why you might get your teeth whitened. Everyone is different; and just as our hair and skin colour vary, so do our teeth. Very few people have brilliant-white teeth, and our teeth can also become more discoloured as we get older.

Your teeth can also be stained on the surface by food and drinks such as tea, coffee, red wine and blackcurrant. Smoking can also stain teeth.

'Calculus' or tartar can also affect the colour of your teeth. Some people may have staining under the surface, which can be caused by certain antibiotics or tiny cracks in the teeth which take up stains.

## What does tooth whitening involve?

Professional bleaching is the most usual method of tooth whitening. Your dentist will be able to tell you if you are suitable for the treatment, and will supervise it if you are. First, the dentist will put a rubber shield or a gel on your gums to protect them. They will then apply the whitening product to your teeth, using a specially made tray which fits into your mouth like a gum-shield.

The 'active ingredient' in the product is usually hydrogen peroxide or carbamide peroxide. As the active ingredient is broken down, oxygen gets into the enamel on the teeth and the tooth colour is made lighter.

## How long does this take?

The total treatment can usually be done within three to four weeks. First, you will need two or three visits to the dentist. Your dentist will need to make a mouthguard and will take impressions for this at the first appointment. Once your dentist has started the treatment, you will need to continue the treatment at home.

This means regularly applying the whitening product over two to four weeks, for 30 minutes to one hour, or even overnight. However, there are now some new products which can be applied for up to eight hours at a time. This means you can get a satisfactory result in as little as one week.

## What other procedures are there?

There is now laser whitening or 'power whitening'. During this procedure, a rubber dam is put over your teeth to protect the gums and a bleaching product is painted onto your teeth. Then a light or laser is shone on the teeth to activate the chemical. The light speeds up the reaction of the whitening product and the colour change can be achieved more quickly. Laser whitening is said to make teeth up to five or six shades lighter.

## How long does this take?

Your dentist will need to assess your teeth to make sure that you are suitable for the treatment. Once it has been agreed, this procedure usually takes about one hour.

## How much does tooth whitening cost?

You cannot get whitening treatments on the NHS. Private charges will vary from practice to practice and region to region. Laser or power whitening will be more expensive than professional bleaching. We recommend you get a written estimate of the cost before you start any treatment.

## How long will my teeth stay whiter?

The effects of whitening are thought to last up to three years. However, this will vary from person to person. Additional whitening for one or two nights every 6-12 months can also prolong the effects. The effect is less likely to last as long if you smoke, eat or drink products that can stain your teeth. Ask your dentist for their opinion before you start the treatment.

## What are the side effects?

Some people may find that their teeth become sensitive to cold during or after the treatment. Others may have discomfort in the gums, a sore throat or white patches on the gum line. These symptoms are usually temporary and should disappear within a few days of the treatment finishing. If any of these side effects continue, you should go to your dentist.

The total tooth whitening treatment can usually be done within three to four weeks.

## What about home kits?

Home kits are cheaper. Because tooth whitening is a complicated procedure we advise that you always talk to your dentist before starting the treatment.

Many kits sold in the UK do not contain enough of the whitening product to be effective and some kits sold over the internet may contain mild acids and abrasives.

## What about whitening toothpastes?

There are several whitening toothpastes on the market. Although they do not affect the natural colour of your teeth, they may be effective at removing staining. Therefore, they may improve the overall appearance of your teeth. Whitening toothpaste may also help the effect to last once your teeth have been professionally whitened.

We recommend that you look for the accreditation symbol on the packaging of oral care products. This is a guarantee that the claims made about the product have been scientifically and clinically checked by an independent panel of experts.

## When might tooth whitening not work?

Tooth whitening can only lighten your existing tooth colour.

Also, it only works on natural teeth. It will not work on any types of 'false' teeth such as dentures, crowns and veneers. If your dentures are stained or discoloured, visit your dentist and ask for them to be cleaned.

## How can I look after my teeth once they have been whitened?

You can help to keep your teeth white by cutting down on the amount of food and drink you have that can stain teeth. Don't forget, stopping smoking can also help prevent discolouration and staining. We recommend the following tips to care for your teeth:

- Brush your teeth for two minutes, twice each day with a fluoride toothpaste
- Cut down on how often you have sugary food and drinks
- Visit your dentist regularly, as often as they recommend.

## For further information on tooth whitening, talk to your dentist or treatment coordinator at your practice.



Left: Before and after tooth whitening

# 20

## *tips for better oral health*

There are lots of things you can do to maintain your dental health and achieve a fresh and attractive smile. Here are a few top tips to get you going...

**01** Brush your teeth at least twice a day. When you brush, don't rush. Take enough time to do a thorough job - two minutes is recommended.

**02** Use toothpaste that contains fluoride to help prevent cavities.

**03** Consider using an electric or battery-operated toothbrush, especially if you have arthritis or other problems that make it difficult to brush effectively.

**04** Practice good technique. Hold your toothbrush at a slight angle against your teeth and brush with short back-and-forth motions. Remember to brush the inside and chewing surfaces of your teeth, as well as your tongue. Avoid vigorous or harsh scrubbing, which can irritate your gums.

**05** Know when to replace your toothbrush. Invest in a new toothbrush or a replacement head for your electric toothbrush every two to three months - or sooner if the bristles become frayed.

**06** Cleaning between the teeth at least once a day is important as it removes food and plaque from between the teeth where even the best toothbrush can be ineffective. For most people, doing this once a day is enough and the best time to do it is after your last meal of the day. Clean between your teeth before or after brushing, but rinse your mouth afterward to wash out everything that has been dislodged.

**07** Brush your tongue as well as your teeth to help eliminate mouth-borne bacteria and to keep your mouth and breath fresh.

**08** A mouthwash can help with oral health; mouthwashes with alcohol can dry out the mouth, so try to use brands that contain no alcohol.

**09** Always wait 20-30 minutes before you brush your teeth after eating or drinking acidic food or drink, such as oranges, as this can erode the enamel on your teeth.

**10** Avoid eating too much sugar and drinking sugary drinks such as soda, sweetened teas, or fruit juices, particularly inbetween meals.

**11** Nuts, dairy foods such as cheese, and meats are all good dietary choices that can help strengthen enamel because of the calcium and vitamins they provide.

**12** Chewing sugarless gum after a meal is a good way to substitute brushing inbetween meals; it can help remove food particles from between the teeth and produces saliva which counteract the bacteria.

**13** Make sure you visit your dentist for a full oral health check every six months and a hygienist visit to look after your teeth and gums.

**14** If you have a toothache, it is important to seek dental care immediately as this could be a potential infection or abscess.

**15** Teach your children good oral health techniques from an early age, it's important they get into good habits.



## Top tips for people with sensitive teeth

**16** Make sure you are cleaning them properly. A simple message but if bacteria and plaque build up on the teeth they produce acids and toxins that attack the teeth and gums. These acids can cause decay and make the teeth uncomfortable, whilst the toxins can cause the gums to shrink away from the teeth making the situation worse. Always remember to clean your teeth.

**17** Avoid acidic food and drink. Certain foods contain a great deal of acid, examples are many types of fruit; oranges, lemons, apples etc which contain citric acid. Some fizzy drinks like cola and lemonade, alcoholic drinks like sparkling wines and drinks with mixers are also high in acid. Using a straw to drink through reduces the amount of liquid that goes onto the teeth and helps sensitive teeth.

**18** Avoid extremes of hot or cold. Sensitivity of teeth is believed to be due to movement of fluids along tiny tubes on the

root surface. Extremes of hot or cold move the fluid in these tubes causing pain. The nerve is not actually exposed, but it can feel very uncomfortable. Luke warm drinks can usually be tolerated well.

**19** Use a sensitive formula toothpaste. There are many good toothpastes that can help reduce sensitivity. It is often essential to use them for a few weeks to feel the effect and they work better if some of the toothpaste is rubbed into the area and left to soak in. Some mouthwashes that contain fluoride can also be helpful. Ask your dentist or hygienist for advice.

**20** Have a dental examination. Although sensitivity is often caused by the problems mentioned, there may be other reasons for the discomfort. It is always worth seeking professional advice in case there is some decay, a cracked tooth or broken filling. Your dentist will be pleased to discuss your needs and offer you tailored help and advice.

**FREE** expert dental health information & advice  
**ONLINE**, by **PHONE** or **E-MAIL**

### Keeping your teeth and gums healthy is really important.

At the British Dental Health Foundation our aim is to provide you with all the information you need to maintain your oral health throughout life.

Our help is free, independent and provided by oral health experts including dentists and dental nurses.

#### Go Online

Our website at [www.dentalhealth.org](http://www.dentalhealth.org) is the UK's leading independent dental health website. Our easy to read 'Tell Me About' section offers comprehensive information and advice on all aspects of oral health including children's teeth, cosmetic treatments, diet, gum disease, dentures and treatments. In fact everything you need to know about your oral health.

#### By Phone

Our free National Dental Helpline is staffed by fully trained oral health experts and dental nurses and helps thousands of people each week. Our qualified team are on hand to help with essential information such as explaining dental terms and treatment procedures, the best way to maintain oral hygiene, current UK legislation and regulations, NHS and private dental charges and complaints procedures. **Call on 0845 063 1188** (local rate call in the UK), 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

#### E-mail

If you prefer to receive information and advice in writing, you can also contact the Foundation by e-mail at [helpline@dentalhealth.org](mailto:helpline@dentalhealth.org). Our dental experts will respond to you as soon as possible and ensure you have all the information you need.



Many dentists have private membership plans that help budget the cost of oral healthcare and, at the same time, provide patients with a range of additional benefits. So, if your dentist offers a plan, take the time to find out more. Becoming a member of the practice could pay dividends.

If your dental practice offers private treatment, you may find that they also offer the option to join the practice's membership plan. For a monthly payment via direct debit, membership plans provide patients with a range of exclusive benefits and attractive offers.

Research shows that patients who take out a membership plan with their dental practice are more likely to be more committed to their overall dental health and less likely to miss appointments.

What's more, becoming a member of your dental practice may mean that over time you could save a significant amount of money on the proactive care of your mouth.

#### Membership plan benefits:

- ★ affordable monthly cost - typically from £12.00 per month
- ★ budget for your routine care
- ★ regular check-ups and hygiene care included
- ★ cost of treatments/discounts on treatments included\*
- ★ protection against the costs of an unforeseen accident\*\*
- ★ help with the costs of accessing a dentist in an emergency\*\*
- ★ other exclusive membership benefits such as special offers, preferential appointment times and discounts for families.\*\*\*

**If your dental practice offers a membership plan, ask a member of staff to explain the specific terms and benefits to you.**

\* The inclusion of treatments or discounts on treatment costs varies depending on the specific type of monthly plan offered by the dentist.

\*\* Worldwide Dental Trauma & Accident policy.

\*\*\* Benefits vary by dentist.



In each issue of *Smile!* MAGAZINE, we'll be answering some of the most common questions that patients ask their dentist. You might find a question that relates to you, but remember, if you have any worries or concerns about your teeth, be sure to let your dentist know.

**Q. Is it normal for my gums to bleed when I brush or floss my teeth?**

No, it's not normal. Bleeding gums are a sign of gum disease. Gingivitis is the earliest, mildest stage of gum disease. At this stage, the gums may become red and slightly swollen and they may bleed easily. But most people experience very little discomfort on a day-to-day basis, so they may not bother to see the dentist.

Even if you see your dentist regularly, schedule an extra appointment as soon as possible if you notice redness, swelling or bleeding in your gums, even if it isn't painful. Early intervention is the key to combating the infection before it becomes serious.

**Q. I'm concerned that I might have bad breath, but how do I know for sure?**

It's not possible to detect bad breath (halitosis) by trying to smell your own breath. One test you can use is to lick the back of your hand, let it dry and then smell it, if the odour is not pleasant you are probably suffering from bad breath. However, the most trustworthy way of finding out if you have bad breath is to ask a close friend or family member - they will understand your concerns and be honest with you.

The best way to improve bad breath is to follow a thorough oral care routine including twice-daily tooth brushing and daily flossing to remove the food particles and bacteria that can cause bad breath. That includes brushing your tongue to remove plaque and help keep your breath fresh. There are several tongue cleaning products available - ask your dentist for advice. It's also important to visit your hygienist regularly, who can advise you on a routine to get rid of bad breath. However, bad breath can also be a sign of problems elsewhere in your body.

If you have chronic bad breath and your dentist rules out any oral problems, see your doctor for an evaluation. Bad breath can be a sign of a range of conditions including respiratory tract infections, chronic sinusitis or bronchitis, diabetes, or liver and kidney problems, so it's important not to ignore the problem.

**Q. Can smoking and drinking affect my oral health?**

Yes. Smoking can cause tooth staining, tooth loss, mouth cancer and make gum disease worse. If you smoke, you may need to visit the dentist or hygienist more often, but the best advice is to try to give up. Alcoholic drinks can also cause mouth cancer and if you smoke and drink you're more at risk. Some alcoholic drinks contain a lot of sugar, and some mixed drinks may contain acids. So they can cause decay or erosion if you drink them often and in large amounts.

**Q. How can I protect my teeth when playing sports?**

A mouthguard will help protect you against broken and damaged teeth and even broken or dislocated jaws. It is important to wear a professionally made mouthguard whenever you play any sport that involves contact or moving objects. Ask your dentist about a mouthguard. It is a small price to pay for peace of mind.

**Q. All toothpaste ads talk about removing plaque, what exactly is plaque?**

Plaque is a colourless, sticky film of bacteria and toxins that constantly forms on your teeth. It is one of the main causes of tooth decay. The reason we brush and floss every day is to remove plaque, because bacteria in plaque reacts with sugar in the foods we eat to produce acids that can attack and weaken tooth enamel—the hard, protective covering on our teeth. Eroding enamel leaves the teeth unprotected, allowing for cavities to develop more easily.



“I’ve never seen a smiling face that was not beautiful.”

# If we called it breath-tartar- enamel-whitening-cavities- sensitivity-gums-plaque-paste, would you believe it?

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