

## What do we mean by preventive dentistry?

Summer 2015

**You may have seen the phrase 'taking a preventive approach' to your dental care in our practice literature or on our website but what exactly do we mean?**

Taken literally, preventive dentistry is when we try to prevent problems, such as decay or pain, from starting in the first place. We do this in all manner of ways, including:

- encouraging our patients to visit us for regular dental health examinations, which are vital for allowing us to spot any potential problems early, before they become painful or expensive to treat.

Instead of working in a similar way to most doctors, who only see you when you feel unwell or have a medical issue that's getting you down, we like to maintain good oral health by asking to you to visit us regularly. How often depends on your current dental wellbeing, so it could be anything from every three months to annually.

- giving our patients access to thorough oral hygiene examinations to highlight any areas of your mouth that require extra care

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and attention when brushing at home.

- providing oral health education, such as brushing advice, flossing tips, dietary guidance and smoking cessation care.
- asking you to fill out medical history forms on a regular basis. So many health issues are linked with gum disease - from arthritis and bacterial lung infections, to strokes, diabetes, heart disease and problems with pregnancy. Knowing your medical history helps us treat you personally.
- offering affordable dental health plans that are a great way to spread the cost of regular dental and hygiene appointments.



Dental treatment may not be cheap but dental care is reasonable if you maintain healthy teeth and gums. The best way to do that is to attend regularly for the least expensive but most valuable appointments - the dental and hygiene examinations.

## Caring for vulnerable older people

Some members of our team recently attended an interesting course on providing oral health care for frail and vulnerable older people.

Courses like this give us an insight and understanding into the day-to-day lives of people who are elderly, who have dementia or people who are just unable to live their lives as easily as some of us are able to.

One of the main topics of the course was dementia. Dementia is not a natural part of ageing. It is caused by diseases of the brain, which means that someone who has dementia can start to behave differently - making their behaviour sometimes difficult to understand.



Some members of our team have already undergone training to become 'Dementia Friends' and we are implementing this throughout the practice along with other useful training that will benefit our patients.

We are also planning outreach with care homes to make sure everyone's oral health is taken seriously.

If you would like to find out more, please ask a member of staff.

# Spotlight on - *the next generation*

We speak to lots of patients who say a traumatic experience in the dental chair when they were children has had a lasting effect on the way they feel as adult patients.

As dental care professionals, we have learned our lessons from the past and now take great care in the way we treat our younger patients to ensure they grow up looking forward to visits - rather than dreading them.

Adults' perception and childhood experience of the dentist is very different to today, so please let us help you pass on the best practises and attitudes towards dental care by bringing your children in regularly and showing how important it is by attending regularly yourself too!

We recommend that you bring your children in from birth so that they can grow up feeling comfortable in a dental environment - and they are very welcome to have a go in the 'big chair'!



Children should attend their very own first appointment as soon as their first tooth appears.

All children up to three years old should use a toothpaste with a fluoride level of at least 1000ppm (parts per million). After the age of three, children should use a toothpaste that contains 1350ppm-

1500ppm. Encourage them not to rinse after spitting out the toothpaste, as the fluoride will remain in their mouth for longer and give the best protection against decay. It is important to supervise your child's brushing until they are at least seven and encourage them to brush as soon as they get up in the morning and last thing at night.

## Beware of the dangers soft drinks pose

A NEW study looking into the tooth wear of adults has determined that soft drinks could play the most significant role in the severity of dental erosion.

The findings, published in the Journal of Public Health Dentistry, showed a substantial proportion of adults display some evidence of tooth wear while those with the more severe cases are more likely to consume sugar-based soft drinks and fruit juices.

Results from 3,773 adults revealed that 79 per cent of adults had some evidence of tooth

wear, 64 per cent presented mild tooth wear, 10 per cent moderate tooth wear, while 5 per cent exhibited severe tooth wear.

Many soft drinks and fruit juices contain at least six teaspoons of sugar and come in portions larger than recommended, not only leading to dental erosion but quite often tooth decay.

Water and milk are the best choices and remember, it is how often we have sugar that causes the problem so it is important that we try and reduce the frequency of consumption.

## Join our challenge to encourage visits

We only have one set of adult teeth and we would be lost without them! Regular visits help keep our teeth healthy for life. Please join us by encouraging your family, friends and colleagues to visit their dentist at least once in 2015.

### Acorn Villas Dental Surgery

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#### Opening hours

Monday	8.00am - 5.30pm
Tuesday	8.00am - 5.30pm
Wednesday	8.00am - 5.30pm
Thursday	8.00am - 7.00pm
Friday	8.00am - 4.00pm

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Articles within this newsletter are for information only. It is not our intention to endorse or recommend any specific treatment. You should seek advice and guidance from your dentist when considering any dental treatment or procedure.

## Did you know?

### Congratulations



Anna Lynch had baby Amelia Rose on 14.5.15 weighing 7lbs 7oz. She is such a poppet!

### Exam success

Congratulations to Eilish Ronan who passed her NVQ level 3 in dental nursing in May.

### Best foot forward

Carrie Chapman ran 5k for Macmillan nurses charity in July.

### Wedding bells

Leasa Robinson is getting married to Mick Kaine on 5.9.15. We are all very excited for her.