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Word of Mouth

Issue 2

Simon Anderton



We would like to take this opportunity to welcome a new dentist to Gray's Dental Care. Simon qualified from Manchester in 1999 and spent the next three years in the Royal Navy as a Dental Officer. He has been in general practice since then and has been with us now for four months. He has a special interest in Endodontics (root canal treatment), he also teaches at

Manchester University and is pursuing further qualifications. In his spare time Simon enjoys clay pigeon shooting, rugby and running.

Jennifer Key

Our new hygienist and therapist is another great addition to the team. Jennifer's family emigrated to Canada where she was born and brought up but she has now decided to make her home here in the UK. She sat and passed her Dental Assistant exams in Canada and worked in practice there for a year. Since returning to the UK she has completed the Diploma in Dental Hygiene and



Therapy. Jennifer's interests are figure skating to a competitive level and travelling.

Manchester Dental Specialists



Since the establishment of Dental Specialist lists there has been an increase in public awareness of specialisation. Some patients require treatment by a specialist and this may involve techniques and equipment not readily available in all practices. Incorporated within our building there is a team of GDC registered specialists "Manchester Dental Specialists." This enables us to offer you almost all aspects of specialist dentistry, so there is no need for you to travel to other practices, no matter how complex the treatment required or how many specialists are involved in your care.

Spreading the cost

One of the stumbling blocks when deciding whether to have more advanced treatments carried out can be the cost, or simply the ability to pay for it all in one go. To help with this we now offer an interest-free repayment plan, enabling you to spread the cost of treatment over 6-12 months. There are also low cost plans for spreading payment over 36 or 60 months. Please ask for more details.

New patients

Most of our new patients come from personal recommendations and we are most grateful to all of our regular patients who refer their family and friends to us. If you know of anyone who would like to join our practice please do pass on our details. Thank you for your support.

How many teeth do you have?



As dentists we often see patients with missing teeth who need advice on how to replace them, but occasionally we may see patients who have the opposite problem – extra teeth.

These 'supernumerary' teeth tend to be a genetic trait, and are not very common. Usually it will be just one or two extra teeth, but there have been very rare cases where patients have had as many as 50 teeth altogether! (The normal figure is 32 including the four wisdom teeth).

Extra teeth most commonly appear between the upper two front teeth or in the wisdom tooth area. Sometimes they will come through (erupt), but sometimes they remain lying under the gum. They may look like normal teeth, or may be mis-shapen – for example, extra teeth appearing between the two front teeth are often conical in shape.

They can cause a number of problems for the patient. The extra teeth can make the mouth overcrowded, which can make it difficult to clean the teeth and gums properly and can lead to tooth decay or gum disease. They can also delay eruption of other nearby teeth.

Usually such extra teeth are detected while the patient is still a child, and in most cases we will remove them, and advise whether any orthodontic (tooth straightening) work is required.

Occasionally we also see people who have the opposite problem, ie there are some teeth which simply never appear, leaving gaps. Most commonly this affects an upper front tooth and/or wisdom teeth, but in rare cases it can result in many missing teeth.

If you are concerned about any aspect of tooth development in you or your child, please speak to us – we'll be happy to help.

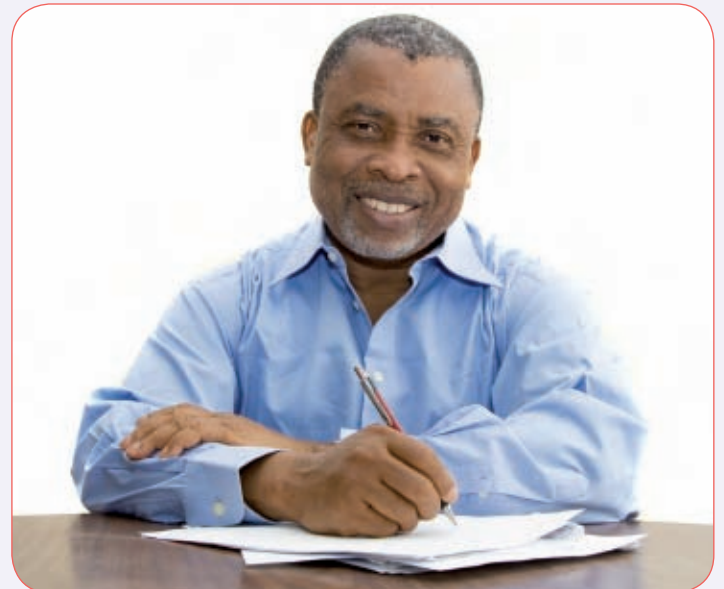
Mouth cancer

Did you know that visiting the dentist could save your life? The reason is simple – part of our examination process is to check for signs of oral cancer, and early diagnosis can make all the difference between life and death.

Around 4,400 new cases of mouth cancer are diagnosed in the UK each year, and these figures are on the increase. Early diagnosis can improve your chances of survival from 50% to nearer 90%.

Those aged over 40 are most at risk, especially if they smoke. Drinking alcohol is also a contributory factor, and if you smoke and drink to excess at the same time (for example during an evening at the pub) you are up to 30 times more likely to develop the disease.

Early symptoms include mouth ulcers that don't heal, white or red patches, or any other unusual changes in your mouth. If you notice any of these, it is important to get them checked out as soon as possible.



During your regular examination, we always look for signs of anything suspicious in your mouth and throat. If we do spot any potential problems, we will let you know immediately and advise you to see an oral surgeon.

For more information, please ask us or visit www.mouthcancer.org or www.mouthcancerfoundation.org

Did you Know?

Only your lower jaw moves when you chew – your upper jaw stays still. Try it for yourself!

What's your smile style?



Of the billions of smiles that happen across the world each day, all of them follow just three basic smile patterns – an astonishing fact which most cosmetic dentists take for granted, using it for their work each day.

For the three different smile patterns show different areas of the mouth, which means they can help to determine the best way of enhancing a smile. As well as helping cosmetic dentists, the patterns are also useful for orthodontists (who specialise in tooth straightening) and specialists who are dealing with traumatic tooth fractures and complicated oral facial surgery.

The most common type of smile is known as the 'commissure' smile, where the corners of the mouth go up and out, and the upper lip draws back to show the upper teeth. Famous personalities with this type of smile include Jennifer Aniston, Frank Sinatra, Jamie Lee Curtis and Audrey Hepburn.

Elvis probably has the best known 'cuspid' type of smile, which is found in just under one third of the population. If you look at his smile, together with those of Tom Cruise, Drew Barrymore, Linda Evangelista and Tiger Woods, you will see that the corners of their mouths do not rise much, and are usually lower than the centre of the top lip.

The remaining two per cent of the population share their smile type with Julia Roberts (pictured left) and Marilyn Monroe. They have a 'complex' smile, which is characterised by the way in which, when they smile fully, the lips are almost parallel to each other, and all the teeth are shown.

So – are you a Julia Roberts or Audrey Hepburn? Old Blue Eyes or Tom Cruise? Whichever you are, if you're not completely happy with your smile, please speak to us. We'll be happy to suggest ways in which it could be enhanced, and in most cases those enhancements can be surprisingly affordable.

Why sugar-free does not mean problem-free

Fans of fizzy drinks are being warned that sugar-free versions can still cause serious and permanent damage to their teeth.

The warning comes as the range of drinks with no sugar or no added sugar continues to grow.

Dr Nigel Carter, chief executive of the British Dental Health Foundation said: "The Foundation is delighted that increasing numbers of drinks companies are taking steps to make their product healthier."

"However, we are concerned that clever marketing could persuade some consumers that they can drink as many sugar free drinks as they like without suffering any consequences."

All fizzy drinks, even fizzy water, can harm the teeth if they are consumed too frequently. Each time you eat or drink anything acidic, the hard outer coating (enamel) on your teeth becomes softer for a while and loses some of its mineral content.

This damage is slowly neutralised by your saliva, but if the acid attack happens too often the saliva does not have chance to repair the damage, and over time the enamel can be destroyed.



Dr Carter added: "We recommend that if you must drink fizzy drinks you limit them to mealtimes only to keep erosion to a minimum. However, if you can avoid them altogether then you should.

The only completely safe drinks for teeth and milk and still water."

Did you Know?

In ancient Greece, donkeys' milk was used as a mouthwash – it was believed to strengthen the gums and teeth.

Kissing with confidence



We can often feel uncomfortable about our breath after eating curries or garlic, but some people suffer from chronic bad breath more often, even every day.

The good news is that there is plenty that can be done to help you maintain fresh breath and keep you kissing with confidence.

Odour caused by spicy foods is probably the easiest to deal with. You can either avoid the foods, or clean your teeth and use mouthwashes to mask the smell until it disappears naturally (usually within 24 hours).

Chronic bad breath (halitosis) takes a little more work, but can still be relatively easy to cure with a strict daily oral healthcare routine.

This includes brushing thoroughly twice a day, especially at bedtime, for at least two minutes and using a fluoride toothpaste. You should also clean between your teeth and underneath the gumline – we can advise you on the best ways of doing this.

Your tongue can harbour a lot of odour-causing bacteria – this can be removed by brushing your tongue clean, or you might prefer to use a tongue scraper.

You should also visit us regularly for dental check-ups and hygiene appointments. This helps to ensure that gum disease and tooth decay do not contribute to any breath problems.

Sometimes despite your best efforts you may still suffer from bad breath. This may be due to a chemical imbalance in your mouth, and often we can still help by recommending toothpastes, mouthwashes or oral sprays specifically created to combat bad breath.

If you think that you may have a problem with breath odour, please do not be embarrassed to speak to us about it – we'll be happy to help.

Questions & Answers

I really struggle when I visit the dentist because I cannot stand having dental instruments put in my mouth – they make me gag. I find this very distressing and embarrassing, and as a result have not been to the dentist for several years. Is there anything that can be done to help?

This is a surprisingly common problem, and can affect patients in a number of different ways. For example, some may gag if an instrument touches their tongue, others may have problems when they have an impression (mould) taken. Often such problems are as a result of being nervous. In many cases, discussing your

problems with a dentist who is gentle and has a calm and reassuring manner can make all the difference. If you still feel you need an extra helping hand, there are other ways in which you can be helped, including sprays to numb the gag reflex area.



I'm thinking of having my teeth whitened. Can I do it myself or should I get it done professionally?

This is something we are often asked, especially with so many off-the-shelf whitening products now available. It is vital to have a word with your dentist about it to ensure a safe and effective result. The first thing we will do is ensure that your teeth are suitable for whitening, and discuss which methods are best for you. The professional whitening procedures involve a stronger whitening process than the shop-bought products, and so are far more effective. They also avoid problems that can occur when using a DIY shop-bought kit, such as patchy-looking teeth and sensitivity. Finally, we can also provide top-up kits for use at home to help keep your teeth sparkling and white.

