



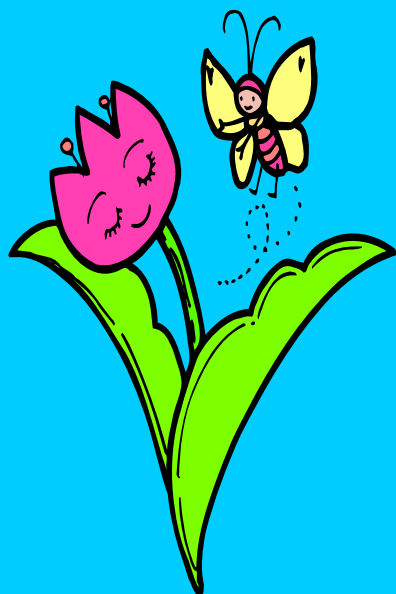
# DR IANS NEWSLETTER



## YES...CHECK-UPS ARE VERY IMPORTANT!

### POINTS

This month we only have two topics as I felt I needed to get the message out the about the importance of regular check ups and also children and brushing



I cant stress enough how important regular dental check ups are. A lot of people are under the impression that if they don't have any pain from there teeth or they have never had a filling then they don't need to get their teeth checked. Car owners.., do you have your car serviced regularly? If a car isn't serviced it is most likely it will give up and fail. The same applies to your mouth, If it isn't checked regularly problems can arise.

During a check up the things that are checked are not only your teeth and existing fillings but you gums, tongue and other soft tissue.

We all know dentists are super heroes but they have not yet been given the power of X-ray vision! So.. periodically X-rays are taken to check in between the teeth for any decay and bone loss around the teeth. Some people are worried about the exposure of radiation in dental x-rays, it is the bare minimum and you would probably be exposed to more radiation

if you were to take a fight in a plane!

Patients often ask why the dentist and assistant leave the room when x-rays are being taken, this is because we can be taking a considerable amount of x-rays throughout the day, where as the patient is only having one or two exposures.

We also protect our patients with a lead apron.

Bone loss around teeth is very often a sure sign of Gum disease and this can become a chronic problem if left untreated and very often it is not painful until the later stages when tooth loss can happen. Decay in teeth at the early stages is very often not painful but left untreated can result in expensive and lengthy treatment and ultimately tooth loss.

When a dentist checks your tongue and soft tissue he is looking for any signs of mouth cancer. This can be nasty and again can very often not be painful until the later stages. If detected

early treatment can be kept to a minimum.

At the check up it is usual to have your teeth cleaned as well. This involves, for older children and adults, using an ultrasonic cleaner to remove calculus from your teeth then polishing them with a special paste. Sometimes a fluoride treatment is used. For younger children we try to make the check up as much fun as possible and try to involve them in everything we are doing, counting their teeth, and polishing them with the special paste. If your child has never been to see us before Katie will post out a letter especially for them telling them about what will happen when they come in to see us. Having your teeth checked on a regular basis of either 6 or 12 month intervals ( the dentist will advise you what time frame is best for you) is the best way to keep your mouth healthy and your teeth strong.

# YOUR CHILD'S TEETH



## BRUSHING CHILDRENS TEETH

This can sometimes be a difficult task as we all know at times our little angels can be stubborn little monsters!!! But.....WE MUST RISE ABOVE!!! We are bigger than them!

All joking aside brushing teeth can be quite an ordeal in some households so I will try and provide you with some handy hints to help overcome some brushing issues.



### **BABIES & TODDLERS**

The earlier you start the easier it should be. Obviously babies cannot clean their own teeth but toddlers although they quite often look like they can brush their own teeth just don't have the dexterity to brush correctly. You should be brushing your child's teeth until they are at least 8 years old. Baby tooth brushes are available at pharmacies. Toddler tooth brushes are also available at pharmacies and some supermarkets.

Even when your baby hasn't got any teeth, just getting them used to having a toothbrush in their mouth will help. No child's toothpaste is necessary at this stage. When their teeth do start to erupt is when the battle can begin! For one thing their little mouth is bound to be a little tender with all those new teeth coming through, teething rings and bonjela (check with your pharmacist first) can help at this stage. It is important **for YOU** to always brush your child's teeth first, trying to use the same routine each time, maybe singing a certain song whilst you do it! Using a pea size blob of child's toothpaste on the brush each time. If you have a wriggler on your hands and they just refuse to let you in there sitting them on your knee and lying them back is quite often a good way to get them to open their mouth. You may seem like you are being the wicked witch of the west but you are doing a necessary thing that if done twice daily will become the norm for them. If you let them win and they don't have their teeth cleaned you run the risk of them developing cavities and having cavities treated is probably going to be a lot more traumatic than having them cleaned in the morning and at night! It is also important to let them have a go

themselves but only after you have done them first. Bribery is another good tool as well. A girlfriend of mine told me that her little boy really loved choosing and having his bedtime stories but hated having his teeth cleaned! If he wouldn't cooperate in having his teeth cleaned he wouldn't get a bedtime story. However if he did have his teeth cleaned he would be able to choose not 1 but 2 stories. She said it worked like a treat every time and even worked with the morning brushing as well.



Find what bribe works for you (as long as it's not lollies!) and more often than not once they get into the routine of cleaning their teeth the bribes are not needed.

### **OLDER CHILDREN**

Brushing teeth for older children especially boys is just not important enough for them!!! They haven't got enough time!! Or if they do get in there it's a very half-hearted effort! It is so important to encourage good brushing in our children as when they get their adult teeth which can start from 8 years old those teeth have to last them the rest of their lives.

Disclosing tablets (available from your pharmacist) are a good way to show them where they are not brushing properly. They are a chewable pink tablet that is chewed and rubbed (with their tongue) around their mouth for 30 seconds preferably after they have brushed their teeth. Then rinse with water and what pink is left over the teeth and tongue is plaque and bacteria that they haven't brushed away when they originally brushed their teeth. It is now visible for them to brush away.

Having an egg timer in the bathroom is a good way to make sure they are brushing for long enough. Two minutes is the average and two minutes can seem like such a long time to a child, at least with the egg timer they can see and or hear the time going by.

Competent brushing will make dental check ups a lot easier and will defiantly keep your child's mouth healthier.