

your dentist

Newsletter of Your Dentist Dental Centre

YOUR PRACTICE NAME HERE

Your Dentist™ dental patient newsletters are personalised with all the details of your individual practice including contact details, opening hours, location, services and more.

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Here's a sample of what you can include about your practice:

DENTISTS

Dr Roy Douglas, BDS
Dr Virginia Douglas, BDS
Dr Nadine Walker, BDS

HOURS

Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm
Thursday 8.00am to 8.00pm
Saturday 8.00am to 1.00pm

LOCATION

Explain the exact location of the practice with the nearest corner or landmark.

PARKING

Include information for your patients on where to park at the practice, street parking or parking stations.

SERVICES

Tell patients about your practice here and list the range of services you provide. The newsletters are designed as a professional way to keep in regular contact with your patients by advocating good oral hygiene in a non-threatening manner.

ORDERING

Simply complete and return the Your Dentist Application Form to receive a draft of how your practice information will look. Your newsletters, your individual style. For ordering purposes, this is:

EDITION 4

Don't shy away from x-rays

Your dentist takes x-rays of your teeth because they help in discovering and diagnosing any problems you may have.

Many problems in the mouth can't be seen by your dentist. A digital image or an x-ray film will assist them.

The majority of dentists in Australia use film to take their x-rays, but the popularity of digital imaging is

guidelines to ensure your safety.

There are three main types of x-rays: bitewing, periapical and panoramic. Bitewing shows the upper and lower teeth. Periapical shows the whole tooth including the root and surrounding tissues. Panoramic shows the teeth and jaws.

There are a number of situations where the use of x-rays may be necessary for correct diagnosis and



increasing. Digital systems offer some basic advantages, such as greatly reduced radiation exposure; faster processing; images that can be manipulated and stored on your dentist's computer; there are also environmental benefits because chemical film processing has been eliminated.

The need for an x-ray depends on such factors as how susceptible you are to decay; whether there are other problems in the mouth; whether the position of the teeth needs to be altered; and for planning restorative treatment.

From childhood to adolescence, generally about six x-rays are needed. Adults need x-rays at least every two years to check for decay and gum disease.

You should not be concerned about radiation from x-rays because your dentist follows very strict

proper treatment. They include:

Decay: An x-ray may be the best way of finding decay between teeth, or under old or leaking fillings or crowns.

Gum disease: An x-ray allows your dentist to assess the extent of damage to the bone caused by periodontal disease.

Wisdom teeth: An x-ray of a wisdom tooth allows your dentist to assess the area for possible sources of trouble in the removal procedure.

Root canal treatment: Problems associated with the nerves of teeth may be difficult to assess without x-rays.

Accidents: An x-ray by your dentist can determine the extent of damage caused by injuries to teeth and jaws.

Orthodontics: An x-ray by an orthodontist shows the position of the teeth before treatment; and helps determine where their proper position should be.

The getting of wisdom

Wisdom teeth usually don't come through the gums until you are a teenager or in your twenties. They are usually the last teeth to come into your mouth.

The majority of us have four wisdom teeth. Quite often there is little space at the rear of the jaw for wisdom teeth to come easily through the gums. If the jaw does not have enough room for the wisdom tooth to come through, the tooth will become wedged or impacted.

Some impacted wisdom teeth remain buried and cause no trouble. However, other impacted wisdom teeth may cause severe problems.

If one or more of your wisdom teeth causes problems, your dentist may recommend that it be removed. It should be removed soon so that pain, infection or other problems do not get worse.

However, your dentist may recommend other options. If there is an infection around the tooth, your dentist may delay surgery while the infection is being treated. There is a possibility your dentist can fix the problem and removal won't be necessary.

Removal of a wisdom tooth is a common procedure. Removal of troublesome wisdom teeth should usually be done as soon as possible before the problems get worse. If your wisdom teeth are likely to be difficult or complicated to remove, your dentist may refer you to an oral surgeon. An oral

surgeon is specially trained in surgery of the mouth, teeth, gums and jaws.

Your dentist may recommend early removal of one or more wisdom teeth because there is not enough room for the tooth to push through; or you need orthodontic work, and the remaining teeth



would be crowded by wisdom teeth, making existing problems worse.

It is best to have troublesome wisdom teeth removed when you are still young. The tooth roots have not yet completely formed and the bone surrounding the tooth is softer allowing easier removal of the tooth, with less risk of damage to nerves, bone or other teeth.

An impacted wisdom tooth will start to push through the gum, and an infection can start around the top of the tooth. Infection and inflammation can cause pain, swelling and jaw stiffness. Swallowing may be painful. The infection can cause bad breath.

Your Dentist may clean the infected area around the tooth. You may be advised to rinse your mouth often

with a warm saltwater mouthwash.

Use one teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water. The water should be as warm as possible, but not too hot. Your dentist may also suggest a disinfectant mouthwash and a pain killer for you to use.

Your dentist may prescribe antibiotics. Tell your dentist if you have ever had an allergic reaction to any antibiotics or other drugs.

Pressure from the wisdom tooth may cause pain in the tooth next to it. Pain can also be caused by infection around the wisdom tooth.

If a wisdom tooth is not removed, a cyst can form around the tooth and may displace the tooth. This can destroy bone and damage other teeth and the gums. An

impacted wisdom tooth may keep pushing the molar next to it. This can cause an erosion cavity where the wisdom tooth hits the other molar. This often leads to serious damage to both teeth. The molars may become infected or abscessed. Removal of both molars is often needed.

An upper wisdom tooth may push sideways out of the gum. It may cause an ulcer where it rubs against the inside of the cheek. Food can also become trapped between the wisdom tooth and the molar next to it. This can cause cavities in both teeth.

It's always a good idea to ask your dentist about "the state of play" with your wisdom teeth, that is if they have not already been removed!

Ask your dentist

Do you want to know more about the information on this page? Ask your dentist and they will be happy to help.

Losing weight and bad breath

Going on a diet may leave you with bad breath. Infrequent eating causes bad breath as bacteria in the mouth becomes stagnant. Chewing and the texture of some foods cleanses the mouth. But while dieters are a high-risk group for bad breath, lack of good oral hygiene is still the leading cause of the condition. Other factors include odour-causing foods, continued mouth dryness, smoking, sinus and respiratory infections and even certain medications. Bad breath can be temporarily masked by mouth washes, but the most effective treatment is simple, regular cleaning, including tongue brushing.



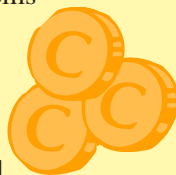
Did you know?

During an average lifetime of 78 years, a person will spend more than 1896 hours brushing their teeth, providing they brush for two minutes, twice daily. Considering the amount of time we devote to brushing in a lifetime, choosing the right toothbrush is essential. The Australian Dental Association recommends that you replace your toothbrush every three months.

Watch those Vitamin C tablets

People who chew Vitamin C tablets to protect themselves against colds risk serious dental problems because of acid dissolving their teeth.

Those who chew Vitamin C tablets, rather than swallow them whole, are bathing their mouths in ascorbic acid and, over a period of time, this can have devastating effects. People also risk damaging their teeth with acid if they consume too much fruit, fruit juice, soft drinks and wine.



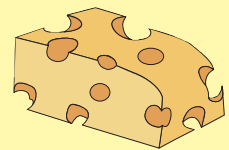
Brushing teeth too much!

An American study has found that children who brush their teeth too much could be doing more harm than good. The study found too much fluoride, from toothpaste or other sources, was not to be recommended in young children. Researchers at the University of Connecticut say that excess fluoride can cause a condition known as dental fluorosis. In its mild form, fluorosis appears as white lines or streaks on the teeth, although severe cases can lead to mottled teeth and even brown staining or pitting of enamel.



Calcium good for gums

A U.S. study has found eating at least three servings of calcium-rich foods a day could substantially reduce the risk of gum disease. The researchers found that men and women whose intake of calcium was less than 500mg a day were almost twice as likely to have gum disease and tooth decay. People aged between 20 and 40 were most at risk. The study involved 13,000 people and showed milk, cheese and yoghurt helped reduce tooth decay. Foods such as green leafy vegetables, bread and baked beans - all high in calcium - also helped reduce decay levels. Calcium helps prevent osteoporosis, strengthens the jawbone and the sockets in which teeth are placed.



Chocolate flavoured toothpaste

A report in New Scientist magazine, says that Japanese experts hoped to create a toothpaste or mouthwash based on chocolate extracts. The researchers say that there are antibacterial agents in cocoa beans. The agents could offset chocolate's high sugar content. The chemicals are most plentiful in the cocoa bean husk, which is normally thrown away when chocolate is made.

Are your teeth sensitive?

A sharp pain experienced after drinking a hot or cold drink can indicate the presence of a sensitive tooth. A simple test to see if your teeth are sensitive is to run your fingernail gently around where the teeth meet the gum. A sensitive tooth may respond with a short, sharp pain.

Sometimes teeth become sensitive after your dentist or dental hygienist has scaled them, or scraped off the layers of tartar. Tartar or calculus hardened and calcified plaque, which appears as a light brown deposit and usually forms where the teeth meet the gum. It is behind the lower front teeth and the cheek side of upper molars that tend to accumulate the most tartar. Removing this layer can mean the teeth may be sensitive to cold air. Thorough, gentle brushing and flossing to ensure plaque removal will help to improve this sensitivity.

Poor brushing techniques can cause sensitive teeth. If you use a hard toothbrush or do not brush your teeth correctly, you can wear away protective tooth enamel. Toothbrush abrasion from fast and aggressive brushing techniques is commonly seen at the gumline of back teeth, but can also occur at the gumline of front teeth. Your dental professional can assist you with the correct technique for a soft manual toothbrush or an electric toothbrush.

The regular intake of acidic food and drinks can also be a cause of sensitive teeth. You should not brush your teeth immediately after having acidic foods or drinks or after vomiting. The low pH (acidity) of soft drinks, for example, can cause a softening of the exposed surface of the tooth where the

abrasive action of a toothbrush and toothpaste can more easily remove some tooth structure.

Saliva has a natural buffering and rehardening ability to help maintain the teeth when under an acid attack. Professional food and wine tasters, athletes replenishing fluids with sport



drinks, individuals consuming soft drinks, fruit juices and cordials, and people with a tendency to gastric reflux or vomiting should delay their toothbrushing for one hour following these activities to allow sufficient time for the saliva to reharden the exposed areas of the tooth.

As you get older, you may find that your gums are receding, this gives the appearance of getting long in the tooth. Incorrect brushing and flossing techniques can cause gums to recede or pull back, exposing the roots of the

teeth. Once this area is exposed, the chance of sensitivity is greatly increased. These exposed roots can lead to a further problem, a form of decay known as root caries.

The roots of your teeth are exposed when gums recede. These root surfaces are more vulnerable to decay as they have had little exposure to fluoride and don't have the covering of the protective enamel. Root caries is likely to occur more quickly in mouths where saliva flow has been affected by medications, medical conditions, stress and/or medical procedures. Your dentist or dental hygienist may recommend a fluoride product to help prevent this from occurring.

Consult with your dentist and dental hygienist on a correct brushing technique. A toothbrush specially formulated to reduce sensitivity may also help. They will show you the correct brush and how to use it properly.

By brushing gently with desensitising toothpaste, you should start to notice an improvement, in most cases within two to four weeks. If, after one month of consistent use, your teeth are still sensitive, consult your dentist.

If tooth sensitivity is so severe that you cannot brush or floss properly, consult your dentist who may apply a varnish or special solution to the tooth surface for an immediate but temporary relief. Your behavioural habits will determine the effectiveness of this treatment.

Consistent tooth sensitivity that does not respond to conservative treatments is usually an indication of a more serious problem.

Information courtesy of Colgate Oral Care.

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Find all the info and more @ Your Dentist on the internet.