

# Word of mouth

Issue 3

## Facial rejuvenation

The latest and most popular non-surgical facial rejuvenation techniques are now available at The Ealing Dental Practice. If you would like to enhance your appearance and look younger, we can help. We offer professional consultations and treatments to reduce the appearance of facial lines and wrinkles.

Wrinkle treatment can be described as giving a more relaxed and youthful appearance. When combined with other treatments such as dermal fillers and/or tooth whitening the results can be even more impressive. The treatment, which is delivered by injection into the skin, relaxes the muscles that cause these lines, leaving the overlying skin looking smoother and less wrinkled.

We also offer carefully selected dermal filler treatments such as Restylane and Laresse. These can smooth finer lines and enhance lips instantly and help improve facial contours. The materials are fully degradable, the results are immediate and like wrinkle reduction injections, it's absolutely a no 'down time' procedure.

Our dentists have expert knowledge in the anatomy of the face which, together with training in the use of cosmetic treatments and anaesthesia makes them the ideal choice for carrying out your treatment.

To book a free consultation please contact reception. Check our website [www.ealingdental.com](http://www.ealingdental.com) for further information.



## Gum disease and general health

For over 25 years dentists at The Ealing Dental Practice have worked closely with our expert dental hygienists. We may seem to always nag and cajole you into regular appointments however it's not only to help you keep your teeth for life.

Gum disease is increasingly being linked to other medical conditions, making it even more important for you to seek our hygienists help with combating it. Numerous research studies have shown a link between heart disease and certain bacteria in gum disease. While research continues to explore the link, it is important to treat gum disease aggressively so its impact on heart disease can be reduced or eliminated.

Researchers have pointed to a relationship between gum disease and strokes, respiratory disease and osteoporosis.

Pregnant women with gum disease are said to be more likely to have a baby that is born too early and too small, and there are also links with diabetes.

Given the various risks associated with the disease, it makes sense to visit us regularly so we can help you to combat it.

Our hygienists play a vital role in this. They clean your teeth often under the gum where no toothbrush can go to reduce the population of toxin producing bacteria that leads to gum disease. Our hygienists can also advise you on the best way to care for your teeth and gums, helping you to avoid future problems.

## Advancing our expertise

We would like to take this opportunity to tell you about Dr Brendan Carr's recent visit to the British Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (BACD). The BACD make it possible for dentists to meet to share ideas, knowledge and experiences to help improve the quality of service they can offer. They also set up conferences which focus on the latest issues, and offer useful help and advice. For more information about the BACD please visit [www.bacd.com](http://www.bacd.com).

Cosmetic dentistry is becoming increasingly popular as more people are realising the benefits of having a great smile. Modern techniques include tooth whitening and smile-transforming veneers. Please ask if you would like to find out more about the latest advanced cosmetic techniques and how Brendan can help enhance your smile.

# 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](http://www.mouthcancer.org) or [www.mouthcancerfoundation.org](http://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.

