



AN APPOINTMENT WITH YOUR HYGIENIST

As your Dentist, I have recommended an appointment with one of our Dental Hygienists, Jennifer McFarlane or Libby Hendry to help treat early or more advanced periodontal (gum) disease and to give you guidance on how best to care for your teeth and gums in the future. This information sheet has been written to provide an explanation of the problems and techniques for treating gingivitis and periodontitis.

- If gingivitis has been diagnosed, this is an early sign of gum disease which can be quickly reversed with treatment. (You may have noticed some bleeding from your gums and bad breath associated with this).
- If periodontitis has been diagnosed, this is the inflammation of the supporting tissues/structures of your teeth (ie, gums and bone). Periodontitis is advanced gum disease which can be treated and monitored professionally by your Dental Hygienist. (You may have noticed some gum recession, tooth mobility and bad breath associated with this).

At your Hygienist Appointment

It is important that you notify the hygienist of any changes to your medical history (eg, medical conditions and medications) as this may influence your treatment needs. The reasons for updating your medical history include the following:-

- ❖ Anticoagulant therapy (ie, Warfarin) with periodontal treatment may result in excessive bleeding.
- ❖ Certain medication taken for high blood pressure and other conditions, such as epilepsy, could cause your gums to overgrow. A meticulous oral hygiene regime is, therefore, required.

- ❖ Some antidepressants can dry the mouth adding to your risk of tooth decay and gum disease.
- ❖ Smoking and diabetes are both major risk factors in periodontal disease. This means that you are more susceptible to having gum problems and a high standard of oral hygiene is required.
- ❖ If you have a heart valve replacement or valve damage, you will be required to take antibiotic cover one hour prior to your hygiene appointment as bacteria from the gums can enter the blood stream and cause a condition known as Infective Endocarditis which requires hospitalisation and may be fatal.

In a similar way to your Dentist, the Hygienist will usually begin by checking your oral mucosa and will screen your tissues for signs of infection or disease. At this point, she will also be able to identify any possible future problem areas. Jennifer or Libby will clean your teeth with the most up-to-date equipment. A water scaler (Cavitron) may be used initially to remove large deposits of tartar and plaque. Hand instrumentation will then be used to complete the removal of deposits, followed by a polish. The practice also has a powerful air polisher available which is excellent at removing extrinsic staining from your teeth ie, tea, coffee, red wine and tobacco. There should be no pain during this procedure but it may be a little uncomfortable. You, as our patient, are in control at all times. If you feel uncomfortable with any part of the treatment or find that you are experiencing excessive sensitivity, please help us modify the treatment to suit yourself.

We aim to care for your individual oral health. Jennifer and Libby will do their utmost to ensure that your visit to the surgery is as pleasant and as informative as possible. At the end of your visit, the Hygienist will discuss your treatment plan and advise you of the oral hygiene products she considers will achieve the most effective daily oral health routine. Please bring along your toothbrush and inform the Hygienist of the oral health products you are presently using eg, floss, mouth-rinses etc.

We aim to treat our patients as individuals and to give you the best care and attention which we feel you deserve to achieve and maintain a healthy happy smile for life!

