

Poet's Corner...

Lets face it, going to the dentist
Is no-one's favourite thing to do.
I'd rather do the chores I detest,
Including scrubbing the downstairs loo!

But our teeth need to be loved and cared for
To enjoy the food we eat.
And to smile or be smiled at with ease
Is a feeling you just can't beat.

Thank heavens then for new technology
As dental visits you needn't now fear.
New numbing paste – your choice of flavour
And the new TENS job no longer brings a tear.

My last visit was to see the hygienist,
Along with a DVD to watch on the telly.
I always choose something passionate and
soothing
.....like the gorgeous Andrea Bocelli.

I wasn't blessed with a lovely neat smile,
And to correct it fair treatment to face
But at 39 years old and with a lot of encouragement
I'm now proudly wearing a brace.

They say life begins at 40.
By then I hope to have the smile of my dream.
And all made so much easier to bear,
By using Winning Smiles, Murray and his team.

Juliette Macey



N.H.S. Honours Winning Smiles



Not every child is lucky enough to be receive their treatment at a preventively orientated practice like Winning Smiles. To help give every local kid as fair a start as possible in their dental life our oral health nurses visit most local schools and playgroups to teach the pupils how to care for their teeth. We are delighted that this work has been recognised by the N.H.S. in Dorset who shortlisted the practice for their Improving Health and Reducing Inequality Award.

Smile Line

the newsletter of Winning Smiles Dental Care

www.winningsmilesgillingham.com

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Before the Stars had Perfect Teeth...

It is no secret that one of the first things that celebrities do once they get famous is to get their teeth fixed. In each edition of Smileline we are planning to trawl the archives to show you 'before' and 'after' photos of your favourite stars.



Dark Teeth Can Age a Woman by 13 Years!

Research published in November 2009 has revealed that having dark or discoloured teeth can age a woman by a staggering 13 years!. Two thousand people were shown pictures of an attractive model. Half were shown the unaltered image on the left. The other half were shown the image on the right in which the model's teeth have been digitally darkened. The public viewing the first image estimated the model's age as 31 whilst those shown the second image guessed that she was 44!
If you would like to lower your apparent age by 13 years read our 'Tooth Whitening for Life' article below.



How much does it cost to lighten your teeth at Winning Smiles? Just £365.
There really is not a cheaper way to make yourself look younger!

Tooth Whitening For Life!

Whitening your teeth is a very simple, fast and safe way to make yourself look up to 13 years younger. It is very easy to turn back the hands of time but unfortunately once you have done so the clock starts ticking again. Once lightened, teeth gradually begin to darken again. Wouldn't it be lovely if you could maintain your teeth at their new lighter colour for ever?
The wonderful news is that if you are a Winning Smiles patient you now can! Once we lighten your teeth we will automatically and free of charge enrol you in our 'Tooth Lightening for Life' scheme. If you are a Smilecare or Denplan patient you can receive up to three tubes of whitening gel a year free of charge. If you are a private patient you will receive a free tube of whitening gel every time you visit the hygienist.

Congratulations to....

*Sharon... who gave birth to her third daughter - Mariella
Born on the 21st May 2009 at Salisbury Hospital.
Mariella weighed in at 8lb 2oz.
Sharon has now completed her maternity leave and is
back working four days a week at Winning Smiles.*

*Julie... who has been chosen to play cornet with the
Birmingham Symphony Orchestra at the Colston Hall in Bristol.*

*James... who was runner -up in the UK Clinical Dental
Technician of the Year Awards.*

*Wendy... who has gained a place to study dental therapy at
Bristol University. Wendy will continue to work one day a week
as a hygienist at Winning Smiles for the next two years.
Once qualified as a dental therapist she will be able to provide
routine fillings as well as continuing to treat gum disease.*



A Simple Cure for Headaches and Migraines

Migraines, sinus pains and persistent earaches can often be caused by clenching of the teeth, especially whilst sleeping, when surprisingly the force exerted can often be as much as fifty times that exerted when you are awake. Nocturnal tooth clenching is stress related so as our lives become busier and more stressful these symptoms are becoming more and more common.

When you clench your muscles you get a build-up of a substance called lactic acid. This is the same substance which makes the muscles in your arms and legs feel stiff and uncomfortable when you take much more exercise than your body is accustomed to. The build

up of lactic acid in the jaw muscles when you clench or grind your teeth makes the nerve fibres which transmit pain messages to the brain much more sensitive. The result is that sufferers are much more prone to headaches, migraine or occasionally to earaches or disturbed vision.

Research conducted by the United States Federal Drug Agency found that 82% of migraine sufferers could obtain relief by wearing a dental splint overnight. On average the severity of their symptoms decreased by 77%. The treatment was most effective for patients who actually woke up with headaches or who experienced regular headaches in the early morning and in patients who experienced pain behind their eyes.

The splints are designed to separate the teeth at exactly the distance which triggers a reflex to stop the jaw muscles contracting. As a result the build up of lactic acid and with it the frequency of headaches is reduced.

David Hussey mentioned at a recent

check-up that he was suffering from persistent headaches. He was aware of clenching his teeth at night so we made him a headache splint. 'Immediately the headaches reduced significantly' he says, 'and now after a few months they have stopped completely'. Sheila suffered from headaches about four or five mornings a week. Since being fitted with a headache splint she hardly suffers at all. 'It is so comfortable to wear that I now hardly notice it at all.' she says. 'My jaw also feels far more relaxed, so I must have been doing a lot of night jaw clenching!'

If you suffer from regular headaches please let us know so that we can check to see whether tooth clenching or grinding might be a possible cause.

You can also obtain more information on the dental treatment of Migraine from the Migraine Trust who can be contacted at 55-56 Russell Square, London, WC1 4HP. tel 020 7436 1336 or at www.migrainetrust.org

End of the Line for Bad Breath?

Bad breath is a terrible and humiliating affliction. Victims suffer anxiety in social situations and are often shunned by neighbours, work colleagues or classmates. They become the butt of cruel jokes and often suffer from low self esteem. Yet the fact is that bad breath (halitosis) is a simple medical condition which, once diagnosed, can usually be very successfully treated. The results can be life transforming. Those cured benefit from a tremendous rise in confidence and self esteem.

The smell we associate with halitosis is produced by sulphur-producing bacteria. These can flourish for a number of different reasons. The problem can be brought about by a reduced salivary flow, stress, sinus infections, gum disease, dental decay, as a side effect of medications or as a side effect of underlying medical conditions such as diabetes or kidney disease. 85% of the time the problem originates somewhere in the mouth so dental science has always been in the forefront of the battle against halitosis.

The key to successful modern treatment is to find out where the odour is coming from and to tailor the treatment to match the source of the

problem. A highly specialist machine called a halimeter is used to gain a measurement of the strength of odour and to determine which of the three main sulphide gases responsible for halitosis are present in the breath. This provides valuable clues as to the source of the problem. A thorough examination is then made of the entire mouth including the tongue, tonsils, gums and teeth. This examination frequently involves taking an x-ray of the jaws. The flow rate of the patient's saliva is measured and a simple test is made to assess the possibility that the patient may be suffering from diabetes. It is also important that the dentist is able to analyse the patient's diet so before attending the halitosis clinic patients are asked to complete a detailed record of everything they eat and drink over a three day period. It is only once all the information gathered has been analysed that a diagnosis of the source of the problem can be made and an individual treatment programme be designed for the patient concerned.

The cost of a complete breath analysis is £160.20 for Winning Smiles patients. (Patients of other practices can be analysed for a fee of £178.32) This includes the cost of any necessary x-rays, of saliva flow and diet analysis and diabetes screening along with provision of a personalised treatment

programme. If desired, a free follow up halimeter analysis can be arranged six to eight weeks later to confirm that the odour has disappeared.



A Smile Makeover from Bethan

This 33 year old lady had crossed-over front teeth and some very shabby old veneers. Bethan simply replaced the veneers, altering the shape of the central teeth to eliminate the cross-over. What a transformation!



Mind The Gap!

What do you do if you have a gap between your front teeth? Some people like the late comedian Terry-Thomas simply make a virtue of it. Others view it as an affliction and refuse to smile in photographs (or worse still, cover their face with their hand when they talk and refuse to smile at all).

Murray's wife Sue, had had a gap between her front teeth for as long as she could remember. It never stopped her smiling, (and it certainly never stopped her talking!) but she never really liked it. She was not concerned about it enough to have 'train track' braces fitted on her front teeth but when Murray started treating patients using the revolutionary new American 'Invisalign' brace system she decided that this was too good an opportunity to miss. She wore the transparent braces for just eighteen weeks. 'It is amazing how different it makes me look and feel about myself' she says 'I would never have thought that closing such a small gap would make such a big difference'



Rupert had a much bigger gap between his front teeth. This called for a different solution. The central teeth had crowns which had been in place for several years and were beginning to look a little tired. Replacing the crowns would provide an ideal opportunity to close the gap between his front teeth. However the gap was so large that it would not have been possible to close it simply by replacing the old crowns with wider ones – the teeth would have been wider than they were long which would have looked ridiculous. Instead we closed some of the space by making the porcelain on the new crowns wider on the side next to the gap but maintained the correct proportions by making it much narrower on the other side. We then widened the teeth either side slightly by bonding on thin slivers of porcelain called veneers. The result was spectacular!

Breakthrough Scanner for Winning Smiles!

Last year Winning Smiles became one of the first practices in Europe to acquire a revolutionary new gum disease scanner. The device relies on a form of sonar, first developed for use in submarines, to detect the loss of the bone and gristle which supports the teeth. 'Gum disease is still the biggest single cause of tooth loss in this country,' explains Murray. 'However the disease is usually pain free and so the condition generally goes undetected until it is too late. This scanner enables us to detect the disease early and to monitor the effectiveness of treatment on individual teeth'. The scanner, known as an 'electroperigraph' (E.P.G.), provides a printout very similar to the ECG printout developed for heart disease. The printout shows where gum disease is present and records where in the mouth the condition is improving or deteriorating.

Are You Paying Too Much for Your Dental Treatment?

Many patients fund their treatment through schemes such as the Tesco Dental Insurance Plan and the Simply Health Plan (formerly known as the HSA). In return for a monthly payment these schemes permit you to claim back a portion of your dental treatment costs. Until fairly recently these schemes have represented quite good value for money. However both companies have recently moved the goalposts in quite a dramatic way by simultaneously reducing benefits and increasing payments. If you are on the Tesco plan your monthly payment will now have increased to £19.95. In return for this you will now only be able to claim back 50% of the cost of your fillings or crowns with an annual limit of £1000*. The Simply Health plan enables you to recover 50% of the cost of your fillings and crowns up to a maximum of £1000 per year in return for a monthly payment of £21*. This compares with our own Smilecare scheme under which the average patient pays £27.20 in return for 100% cover with no upper annual limit (the only extra you would ever have to pay is the laboratory technician's fees for the manufacture of crowns, bridges or dentures). The fee you pay depends upon the condition of your mouth when you join so the average fee should just be taken as a guide but if you are on either the Tesco or the SimplyHealth scheme it could be worth your while asking for a Smilecare assessment when you next come in for a check up. It might save you a lot of money. *Details correct at time of print.

Practice information

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Practice Hours

Monday 8.30am - 8.00pm

Tuesday 8.30am - 7.00pm

Wed-Fri 8.30am - 5.30pm

Saturday 9.00am - 4.00pm*

*Two Saturdays per month