



Burnham Dental Practice

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SPRING 2020 NEWSLETTER

At Burnham Dental Practice, we are committed to helping our patients manage their oral health at all times, more so now than ever with these unprecedented times. Although the practice is currently closed for face to face appointments, there is still someone available to answer telephone calls and emails and passing details onto the dentist if required to have phone consultations.

We have been operating a telephone advice line since the beginning of April so that patients are not left in pain during these difficult times. The dentist on duty will advise each patient on the best steps for them to take to resolve any dental problems. Remote prescriptions can be organised to be collected from Savages Pharmacy in Burnham on Crouch. If we think you need to see an emergency dentist, we can refer you to Chelmsford.

The threat of this virus with eventually subside and we will be able to re-open, however, we may be busy. Can we advise you book your next dental/hygienist exam now for the summer period pending virus updates. This will help us to plan staffing and it will ensure you beat the rush and do not forget your dental check-up.



Advice during lockdown

- Use a fluoride toothpaste twice a day
- Brush with an electric toothbrush twice a day
- Don't forget to floss! It is important to use inter-dental aids as 40% of the surface of your tooth is inaccessible to a normal toothbrush.
- Follow a low sugar diet to help keep your teeth healthy
- Try following the 3:2 rule. This means 3 meals, 2 snacks and only water in between.

If you have a dental emergency please call us on 01621 782644.

If out of hours then call 111 or 0300 303 8537 option 1.

If you are booked in for a routine or treatment appointment, please call us to reschedule. If you are unable to call us please email us at info@burnhamdentalpractice.com.

We have members of staff working through the diaries and contacting patients to rebook appointments for later on in the year also.

We would like to thank our NHS and all of the volunteers working together to help keep people safe and healthy during this outbreak.



WHAT COUNTS AS A DENTAL EMERGENCY?

NON-URGENT

Treat at home, or call usual dental practice for further advice

- Loose or lost crowns, bridges or veneers
- Broken, rubbing or loose dentures
- Bleeding gums
- Broken, lose or lost fillings
- Chipped teeth with no pain
- Loose orthodontic wires

URGENT

Call your usual dental practice for advice first

- Facial swelling extending to eye or neck
- Bleeding following an extraction that does not stop after 20 minutes solid pressure with gauze/clean hankie. A small amount of oozing is normal, just like if you had a grazed knee.
- Bleeding due to trauma
- Trauma resulting in a tooth being knocked out of the socket, or a large fracture resulting from trauma and causing severe pain.
- Significant toothache preventing sleep or eating, associated with significant swelling, or fever that cannot be managed with painkillers.

STRAIGHT TO A&E

- Facial swelling affecting vision or breathing preventing mouth opening more than 2 fingers width.
- Trauma causing loss of consciousness, double vision or vomiting.

Toothache

If the tooth is extremely sensitive to hot or cold, this may be a sign of decay and antibiotics will not help. These at home measures may help assist with pain management until you can see a dentist.

- Good cleaning with fluoride toothpaste and reducing sugar intake will help stop decay from getting any worse.
- If there is a hole in the tooth, or the tooth has cracked and is now sensitive, a temporary filling material can be packed into the space to help make symptoms more manageable. These are widely available both online and from supermarkets or pharmacies.
- Toothpaste aimed at reducing tooth sensitivity, such as Sensodyne Repair and Protect, may also help reduce pain. Rub the toothpaste directly onto the affected area and do not rinse. Anaesthetic gel such as Orajel can also help ease the pain.
- If the pain is severe, rinsing with cold water can sometimes ease the pain whilst you are waiting to be assessed by a dentist.

WHY IS IT VITAL TO MAINTAIN GOOD ORAL (MOUTH)HEALTH DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS?

What's the link between mouth health and fighting Covid-19?

We rely on our immune system to challenge and tackle any invaders such as the Covid-19 virus. Where this natural defence system is already being challenged by bacteria from our mouths, due to less than ideal oral health, this system may be compromised. This is something that we should all be thinking about, and why mouth health is so important.

What's more, dentists have for many years been aware of a link between good mouth health and general health. There is an impact of poor gum health on, for example, the control of diabetes and prevention of heart disease.

How to maintain good oral health:

- Brush with fluoridated toothpaste twice per day for at least two minutes. Place your toothbrush at a 45-degree angle to the gums. Gently move the brush back and forth in short (tooth-wide) strokes. Brush the outer surfaces, the inner surfaces, and the chewing surfaces of the teeth. To clean the inside surfaces of the front teeth, tilt the brush vertically and make several up and down strokes.
- Regularly check the brushing technique of younger children. Disclosure tablets are a fun way to ensure your children aren't missing those hard to reach places. Two minutes can feel like a long time to children. Why not read to your children while they brush and if they stop brushing, you stop reading, or you could play their favourite song instead.
- With many of us staying at home and having a bit more time than usual, now is a great time to make flossing part of your daily routine. Floss in areas where the teeth are tightly contacting together.
- If you have more severe gum problems, use the right "tools", such as inter-dental brushes to clean the surfaces of the teeth that cannot be cleaned with a brush alone.
- A healthy diet, low in sugar, fat and salt is essential. If you are going to reach for a treat, they should ideally be consumed at mealtimes to reduce the number of acid attacks per day on the enamel which can lead to tooth decay and caries. Low fat choices like raw vegetables, fresh fruits or whole grain crackers or bread ware smart choices should you want a snack in between meals.
- You will be well aware that smoking is linked to a greater incidence and severity of gum disease. It is recommended that if you cannot quit the habit completely, the use of nicotine patches or similar should be considered in line with medical advice, as these are proven to be better than smoking.
- During our time at home we should also be mindful of limiting our consumption of alcohol. Whilst there may be a greater temptation to have a drink, we must be aware of the increased risk this poses to our mouths, as well as our bodies. Greater alcohol consumption increases the risk for mouth cancer, and if a drinker also smokes this further increases the risk by up to forty times.

