



# Word of Mouth



Spring 2024

## Your dental questions answered!

Avid readers of our newsletter will know that we try to place our focus on oral health matters because a healthy mouth equals a healthy body!

We are dedicating this edition to answering some of your dental health questions.

### I have sensitive teeth. What can I do?

Having sensitive teeth can mean anything from getting a mild twinge to experiencing severe discomfort that can continue for several hours. It can also be an early warning sign of more serious dental problems.

Try using a toothpaste specifically designed for sensitive teeth. Brush your teeth as normal using de-sensitising toothpaste and then rub a little paste onto the sensitive area when going to bed as it helps protect the surface.

Please note that these toothpastes can take anything from a few days to several weeks to take effect.

Try to avoid strongly acidic foods and drinks and wait at least an hour after eating before brushing as this could cause even more sensitivity. Grinding your teeth can also increase sensitivity and a mouth guard may be necessary.

If the pain continues, speak to us. We may be able to offer further care to reduce your symptoms. A number of things can cause sensitivity and we will be able to identify these and offer advice.

### Why does my mouth feel dry?

Dry mouth can be a symptom of many different problems and can happen as we get older. It can be very uncomfortable and can make eating certain foods difficult.

Quite often it is a side effect of prescription medication - especially heart, blood pressure and depression tablets.

If you are taking any regular medication from your doctor, it may be worth discussing these symptoms with them to

see if there is an alternative that does not have the same side effects. Also discuss this with your dentist, who may recommend one of the many products that are available over-the-counter to help to alleviate this problem.

### Speak to us in person

We encourage you to raise any concerns about your oral health during your routine examination and we urge you to let us know if you notice any changes in your mouth since your last visit.

## Transforming smiles with Invisalign

Andrew Halmer, one of the Directors of Dr. Michael Frain, and his nurse Katie exclusively provide Invisalign at our Hathaway Practice in Chippenham and Kerry Crescent Practice in Calne.

Reading all the positive reviews on Google left by satisfied patients who have been thrilled with their results following their Invisalign treatment provided by Andrew and Katie has been fabulous.

If you are interested in booking an Invisalign consultation, please speak to one of our friendly reception team to book.



# Spotlight: What causes gums to bleed?

Gums bleed when they are irritated and inflamed. This is due to plaque (a soft film of bacteria) being left on the teeth that causes inflammation and if not addressed can develop into more serious gum disease and even tooth loss.

Over time, if plaque is not cleaned off through daily brushing and interdental cleaning, the plaque can turn into a hard deposit called tartar or calculus which will require professional removal by your dentist or hygienist.

Even if our gums bleed it is important they are still brushed to keep the mouth clean otherwise the bacteria build up in the mouth making gum inflammation worse.

**After a few days of thorough cleaning, the gums should stop bleeding. If this doesn't happen, please get in touch.**

A good daily oral care regime of brushing twice a day with fluoride toothpaste for a minimum two minutes each should prevent our gums from bleeding.



This regime can be further supported by using interdental brushes before toothbrushing to dislodge any bits of food stuck between our teeth that can then be easily brushed away with a manual or electric toothbrush.

We always recommend regular dental examinations to help diagnose and treat anything unusual in your mouth and to ensure you get the correct care and advice.

Please consider using a softer brush whilst the gums are inflamed until they become healthier. It is also important to

continue cleaning in between our teeth daily using interdental brushes or floss.

**IMPORTANT** - Smoking can cover up a gum problem as it restricts blood flow to the mouth. If you have recently given up smoking this could allow the gums to get a better circulation and therefore start to bleed. **If you are a smoker, please ensure you visit us regularly so that we can spot any issues early.**

## Why have my teeth become sensitive?

The part of the tooth we can see has a layer of enamel that protects the softer dentine underneath. If the dentine is exposed, our teeth can become sensitive. Here are some causes of sensitivity:

- **Brushing too hard** and brushing from side to side, can cause enamel to be worn away particularly where the teeth meet the gums. The freshly exposed dentine may then become sensitive.
- **Dental erosion:** this is loss of enamel caused by attacks from acidic food and drinks. If enamel is worn away, the dentine underneath is exposed which may lead to sensitivity.
- **Gums may naturally recede** and the roots of the teeth will become exposed and can be more sensitive. Root surfaces do not have

an enamel layer to protect them.

- **Gum disease:** a build-up of plaque or tartar can cause the gum to recede down the tooth and even destroy the bony support of the tooth. Pockets can form in the gums around the tooth, making the area difficult to keep clean and the problem worse.
- **Tooth grinding:** This can cause the enamel of the teeth to be worn away, making the teeth sensitive.
- **A cracked tooth or filling** can cause the nerve inside the tooth to become exposed.
- **Tooth whitening:** some patients have sensitivity for a short time during or after whitening.

**Please speak to us if you have any concerns.**

## Practice news

### Career opportunity

If anyone is interested in becoming a trainee dental nurse, please get in touch by sending over your CV to [hathrec@drmfrain.co.uk](mailto:hathrec@drmfrain.co.uk)

### Welcome aboard

We want to welcome Dr. Paul Lang who joined Hathaway in March as an associate dentist and Olubukola Diemosor who joined the practice back in January as a hygienist.

### Medical history

We are required to have a full medical history and current medication information for our patients, which is why we regularly ask you to check and update your form. Please ensure you have all relevant information and a list of your medication when you attend for your appointments so we can update our records accurately.

## Hathaway Dental Practice

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### Opening hours

Monday:	8.30 - 19.00
Tuesday:	8.30 - 17.00
Wednesday:	8.30 - 17.00
Thursday:	8.30 - 18.30
Friday:	8.00 - 16.00
Saturday:	9.00 - 14.00

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