Word of Mouth

Dr Michael Frain Ltd

Raise a glass to your oral health

Winter 2025

Say cheers to your oral health (with a glass of milk!) and reap the benefits of giving up alcohol.

Social occasions often involve clinking glasses or having a pint or two, so the decision to give up alcohol - even just for Dry January - may seem daunting.

While many of us are aware of the general health benefits of quitting alcohol or reducing our intake, one aspect that is often overlooked is its positive impact on dental health, explains the Oral Health Foundation.

Improved gum health
Excessive alcohol consumption can lead to a dry mouth, reducing saliva production. Saliva is crucial for maintaining oral health as it helps neutralise the pH in the mouth, promoting the remineralisation of tooth enamel.

When alcohol dries out the mouth, it creates an environment where harmful bacteria can thrive, increasing the risk of gum disease. Giving up alcohol can lead to better saliva flow, ultimately improving gum health and reducing the likelihood of periodontal issues.

Reduced risk of mouth cancer
Alcohol consumption, especially in combination with tobacco use, is a significant risk factor for mouth cancer. In fact, excessive alcohol consumption is linked to around one in every three cases.

Prevention of tooth decay
Alcoholic drinks often contain sugars and acids that can contribute to tooth decay. Additionally, the dehydrating effects of alcohol can lead to a decrease in saliva flow, impairing the mouth's ability to naturally cleanse and protect teeth. If you're partial to spirits, the sugar in mixers can be especially high, so look out for sugar-free or low-sugar options.

Sugar in wine can also vary wildly. Dry red and white wines have around 2 grams of sugar per standard glass. Others have around 3-5 grams, with sweeter wines like Sauternes having 10 grams and late harvest wines 20 grams of sugar per glass. Guidelines recommend that adults should not have more than 30 grams of added sugars a day.

Say goodbye to stains
Many alcoholic beverages, such as red wine and certain cocktails, are notorious for staining teeth. These can be unsightly and challenging to remove with brushing alone.

By giving up alcohol, you not only eliminate the source of these stains but also make it easier to maintain a brighter and whiter smile.

Reduction in bad breath
Alcohol can lead to a dry mouth, fostering the growth of odour-causing bacteria, and the compounds in alcoholic beverages can leave a lingering smell.

If you have any questions, just ask!

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Spotlight: on low mood & dental health

The winter months can be especially hard on our mental health, particularly after a holiday. The Oral Health Foundation delves into the surprising connection between low mood and oral health, exploring how our emotional state can influence our oral hygiene habits and mouth health.

Stress and teeth grinding
Chronic stress and low mood often manifest in physical ways, and one common dental consequence is teeth grinding (bruxism). Grinding your teeth can lead to issues such as enamel wear, tooth sensitivity, and even jaw pain.

Exploring stress management techniques, such as mindfulness or meditation, can help improve your mood and benefit your oral health by reducing the likelihood of teeth grinding. When those don't work, then talk to us about having a mouthguard fitted.

Neglecting oral care during low mood
When we're feeling down or overwhelmed, it's not uncommon for self-care routines, including oral hygiene, to take a back seat. Neglecting regular brushing and interdental cleaning can contribute to the development of tooth decay, gum disease, and other dental issues. Chewing sugar free chewing gum throughout the day can help keep your mouth feeling fresh and fight decay if you don't have the motivation to brush your teeth. It shouldn't be treated as a replacement for brushing, but it can help tide you over.

Impact of medications on oral health
Certain medications prescribed for mood disorders or low mood can have side effects that affect oral health. Dry mouth, for example, is a common side effect of many medications and can increase the risk of cavities. Talk to your dentist about any oral health concerns and we can suggest solutions to mitigate any medication-related effects.

The role of nutrition in mood and oral health
Nutrition plays a crucial role in both mental health and oral wellbeing. A diet rich in nutrients not only supports a positive mood but also contributes to strong teeth and healthy gums.

Speak to us at your next visit if you require further details.

Too few dental jokes in your crackers?

We noticed a severe lack of dental jokes in our Christmas crackers, but worry not as we've compiled a list of our favourites. We' hope they make you smile... no groaning please!

What did the brass player buy at the chemist?
A tuba toothpaste.

What type of bear has no teeth?
A gummy bear.

Why should you be kind to your dentist?
Because they have fill-ings too.

Why did the tree go to the dentist?
To get a root canal.

What's a dentist's favourite animal?
A molar bear.

Where did the whale go to get his braces?
The orca-dontist.

Why did the two dentists get married?
Because they were so enamelled with each other.

Which dinosaur is a dentist's favourite?
A Flosso-raptor.

Why did the doughnut go to the dentist?
It needed a filling.

What is the dentist's favourite film?
Plaque to the Future.

What happened when a dentist went on a date with a builder?
They fought tooth and nail.

Why did the golfer go to the dentist?
He got a hole in one.

What kind of award did our dentist win?
A little plaque.

Practice news

Congratulations!

We are delighted to share that Nichola House, who has been an integral part of our team as a Manager, has been promoted to Director of Business Operations!

Nichola's hard work, dedication, and leadership have been invaluable to our practice, and this well-deserved promotion reflects her exceptional contributions.

In her new role, Nichola will oversee multiple locations, ensuring the same high standards of care and support that our patients and team have come to expect.

Please join us in congratulating Nichola on this exciting new chapter in her career!

Welcome aboard

We're excited to announce that Jo Yilmaz is now the Dual Manager for both our Bellbarn and Melksham practices. Her leadership and dedication will ensure the continued success of both locations.

Please join us in congratulating Jo on her new role!

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Opening hours

Monday:	8.30 - 13.00 & 13.30 - 16.30
Tuesday:	8.30 - 13.00 & 13.30 - 16.30
Wednesday:	8.30 - 13.00 & 13.30 - 16.30
Thursday:	8.30 - 13.00 & 13.30 - 16.30
Friday:	9.00 - 13.00 & 13.30 - 16.00

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