



Dr Grant McAree

Ask Dr. Grant



DR GRANT IS ONE OF THE LEADING COSMETIC DENTISTS IN THE SOUTH WEST AND HAS TREATED PATIENTS FROM ACROSS THE REGION AND BEYOND. HIS MAIN SOURCE OF NEW PATIENTS IS THROUGH WORD-OF-MOUTH REFERRALS

Dental health checks – what's the story?

What are we talking about?

Some of the most common things patients seem to worry about, including sensitivity, crowding and discoloured teeth as well as dental health warning signs you shouldn't ignore, like bleeding gums, aching jaws and bad breath.

My teeth are really sensitive!

If your teeth twinge when you have hot, cold or sweet things, you may just be naturally more prone but it could be due to brushing too hard, acid wear, receding gums or a more serious dental problem. Switching to 'sensitive' toothpaste will usually do the trick and using an electric brush can also help. However, if sensitivity persists, it's worth getting it checked out.

My teeth are becoming more crooked...

Our teeth tend to overlap more as we get older, especially women's lower front teeth. If you feel you're too old for braces, don't forget that revolutionary new braces can straighten teeth in weeks or months rather than years, including just one or two teeth, with no need for 'train tracks'.

... and more discoloured!

Teeth tend to become discoloured over time, either due to the natural ageing process or to repeated staining from things like tea, coffee, red wine and smoking. As enamel becomes thinner with age, tiny cracks also appear,

leaving teeth more prone to stains. Light staining can be kept at bay by switching to an electric brush or removed by a scale and polish while professional teeth whitening can produce an even brighter result.

My gums bleed after brushing

If your gums bleed, don't ignore it – you wouldn't if it was another part of your body. It may be due to brushing too hard, which can wear away both the enamel and your gums over time, or a sign of gum disease, which can lead to tooth loss if left untreated. Going for regular hygiene appointments and switching to an electric brush can help on both counts.

I keep getting bad breath!

If smelly foods or smoking aren't to blame, constant bad breath may be a sign of an underlying oral problem, like gum disease or even mouth cancer, or a wider health issue. If improving your diet and oral hygiene routine (including brushing for two minutes twice a day and flossing) don't do the trick, don't hesitate to see your dentist.

“IT IS HEALTH THAT IS REAL WEALTH AND NOT PIECES OF GOLD AND SILVER.” MAHATMA GANDHI

My jaws often ache in the morning

If you constantly wake up tired or with aching jaws after a seemingly good night's sleep, you may be grinding your teeth, which can wear enamel, leaving you more prone to decay, sensitivity and broken teeth. By addressing the cause – usually stress or your body trying to get rid of an obstruction (a high filling or ill-fitting crown) – and having a special mouth guard made, things should quickly improve.

My teeth keep breaking

If one tooth breaks, it's usually only a minor problem, but if several break, it's likely there's an underlying cause, such as decay or acid wear. Either way, you should get it checked out – if you kept breaking bones, you wouldn't ignore it.

Any final thoughts?

If you've been putting off going to the dentist, the good news is things have changed a lot in recent years. Injections don't have to hurt and new treatment options mean there's no such thing as a lost cause. By going for regular check-ups, problems can be sorted early on – less damage, less worry, less cost. Find a dentist you can trust – we're here to help! **LD**

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