

Improving health together

www.northyorkshireand york.nhs.uk/stayinghealthy

NHS
North Yorkshire and York



Public Health Factsheet

Welcome to this edition of Improving Health Together, a public health factsheet focusing on the issue of dental health.

The factsheet brings together the latest information and best practice to enable health professionals to take a much more active role. The factsheet also signposts to available free resources and websites.

Dental health is important to enable people to smile and feel confident about themselves.

Oral Health

Issue 12 — March/April 2009



Recent thinking suggests that all patients should be given the benefit of advice regarding their general and dental health.

The key messages for a healthy and functioning mouth are as follows:

- ◆ Brush teeth thoroughly twice a day using fluoride toothpaste. After brushing spit, don't rinse.
- ◆ Food and drinks containing sugar should be limited to mealtimes only.
- ◆ Attend the dentist for regular check ups.

Mouth cancer

Mouth cancer can affect anyone, young or old, although the group more likely to be affected are those over 40.

The best way to reduce the risk of mouth cancer is to avoid smoking or the use of tobacco products and drinking alcohol. People who both smoke and drink are 30 times more likely to contract the disease.

The most common signs of mouth cancer are:

- an ulcer or sore area in the mouth or tongue
- a red or white patch in the mouth
- an unexplained pain in the mouth.

If a mouth ulcer doesn't heal within three weeks, it should be checked by a dentist. Regular dental check-ups are the key to early detection and treatment. People with no natural teeth using dentures should still have an annual check. Further information from

www.cancerresearchuk.org or www.reducetherisk.org.uk



**Wednesday
11 March 2009**

Healthy Eating Advice

Healthy eating advice should routinely be given to patients to promote good oral and general health.

The main message is to reduce both the amount and frequency of consuming foods and drinks that have added sugar.

Dietary advice to prevent dental caries

The frequency and amount of sugars should be reduced. Consumption of sugary foods should be restricted to mealtimes.

Limit consumption of foods and drinks with added sugars to a maximum of four times a day.

Sugars (excluding those naturally present in whole fruit) should provide less than 10% of total energy in the diet or less than 60 g per person per day. Note that for young children this will be around 33 g per day.

Potentially cariogenic foods and drinks include:

- ◆ sugar and chocolate confectionery
- ◆ cakes, biscuits, buns, pastries and fruit pies
- ◆ sponge puddings and other puddings
- ◆ sugared breakfast cereals
- ◆ jams, preserves, honey
- ◆ ice cream
- ◆ fruit in syrup
- ◆ fresh fruit juices
- ◆ sugared soft drinks
- ◆ sugared, milk-based beverages
- ◆ sugar-containing alcoholic drinks
- ◆ dried fruits
- ◆ syrups and sweet sauces

It is important to recognise that honey, fresh fruit juice and dried fruit all contain cariogenic sugars so should be limited to mealtimes.

Sugar free medicines

Where possible it is recommended by the dental profession that sugar free medicines should be prescribed.

Please see National Pharmacy Association leaflet – Sugar Content of Medicines (01727 832161) or Delivering Better Oral Health for further information¹.

Tooth brushing

Both major dental conditions of caries and periodontal disease can be reduced by regular tooth brushing with fluoride toothpaste.

- ◆ The fluoride in toothpaste serves to prevent, control and arrest caries.
- ◆ Start brushing as soon as the first tooth erupts.
- ◆ Clean teeth and gums last thing at night before bed and at least one other time each day.
- ◆ Children under 3 should use a toothpaste containing no less than 1,000 ppm fluoride and no more than a smear of toothpaste (a thin film of paste covering less than three-quarters of the brush).



Toothpaste should be kept out of reach of children at all times.

Family fluoride toothpaste (1,350-1,500 ppm fluoride) should be used by all children for maximum caries control .

Children between 3 and 6 should use no more than a pea-sized amount of toothpaste.



Children need to be helped or supervised by an adult when brushing until at least 7 years.

Spit out excess toothpaste after brushing, but do not rinse.

No particular tooth brushing technique has been shown to be better than another but **all** tooth surfaces and gums need to be cleaned systematically.

For effective brushing use a small headed toothbrush.

When using a powered brush ensure it has an oscillating/rotating action.

Mouth guards

A custom made mouth guard from a dentist is recommended as it will offer the most protection when playing contact sports. This is not available on the NHS.

Smoking

Stop smoking guidelines recommend that all health professionals, including dental team members, should check the smoking status of their patients at least once a year, and should advise all smokers to stop smoking (Fiore et al, 2000; West et al, 2000; NICE, 2006).

Motivated smokers who want help to quit should be referred to the NHS North Yorkshire Stop Smoking Service, telephone **0845 877 0025**.

The guide *Smokefree and Smiling: helping dental patients to quit tobacco* was sent to every dental practice in England as part of the Smokefree programme and is the key reference document for dental practices.

- ◆ All patients should have their smoking status (current, ex, never smoked) established and checked at regular intervals. This information should be recorded in the patient's clinical notes.
- ◆ All smokers and those chewing tobacco should be advised of the value of stopping and the risks to their health of continuing. The advice should be clear, firm and personalised. It is essential that the message to all smokers is complete cessation.
- ◆ All smokers should be advised on the value of attending their local NHS Stop Smoking Services for specialized help in stopping. Smokers who are interested and motivated to stop should be referred to these services.

In recent years there has been an increase in mouth cancer mainly amongst smokers and drinkers. Further information can be found at www.mouthcancer.org.

Accessing Dental Services

The following advice should be given to patients in North Yorkshire and York who are not registered with an NHS Dentist.

To register with a dentist

- ◆ Write to NHS Dental Waiting List
FREEPOST
NEA 13107
York YO31 7ZX
- ◆ E-mail: nyy-pct.DentalRegistration@nhs.net
(Security of the global internet/email systems cannot be guaranteed.)
- ◆ Voicemail 01904 724107. Leave:
 - full name
 - full postal address including postcode
 - contact telephone number
 - date of birth.

Failure to leave this basic information will delay the application.

If details previously registered with the NHS Dental Registers below, there is no need to re-register.

- Craven, Harrogate & Rural District PCT
- Hambleton & Richmondshire PCT
- Selby & York PCT
- Scarborough, Whitby & Ryedale PCT

Patients experiencing difficulties can contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on **0800 0688 000**.

To access urgent dental care

Contact your dental practice during normal working hours.

For out of hours advice, contact **NHS Direct 0845 4647** for general advice about accessing dental services.

Patients who do not have a dentist:

During normal working hours, contact the local Emergency Dental Service:

Craven, Harrogate & Rural District	01756 792233 or 01729 822205
Hambleton & Richmondshire	01609 764109
Scarborough, Whitby & Ryedale	01723 342742
Selby & York	01904 725422

Contact the service at 8.30 am to obtain an appointment.

For out of hours advice, contact **NHS Direct Dental Helpline 0845 600 3249**. They are available

Weekdays Monday to Friday 6 pm until 8 am

Weekends Friday 6 pm until Monday 8 am

Bank Holidays

Dry mouth (xerostomia)

Dry mouth is a common side effect of various drugs such as amphetamines, antihistamines and several antidepressants. It is a feeling of dryness through the mouth accompanied by a reduction in the secretion of saliva causing difficulty in speech, eating, swallowing and wearing of dentures.

Due to the lack of saliva in the mouth the risk of dental decay increases, especially to the areas of the neck of the tooth.

Simple measures such as:

- drinking frequent sips of water
 - sucking ice cubes
 - chewing sugar-free gum
- will often help.

There are several products on the market to alleviate the symptoms of dry mouth in the form of mouthwash, sugar free chewing gum, toothpaste/gel. It should be noted that Saliva Orthana spray is derived from porcine products.

Some products are also available through prescription.

An effective oral hygiene routine is essential when suffering from a dry mouth:

- brush twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste containing 1,350 ppm (look at the ingredients listed on the tube)
- using a gel instead of paste will have a less drying effect in the mouth
- use an alcohol free fluoride mouthwash at a different time to when brushing teeth
- attend a dentist on a regular basis.

Free samples are available from www.drymouth.org.uk.

Order your free resources

These are the resources recommended by your Public Health team for use with the dental health campaign.

National Dairy Council

Tiny Teeth - pocket-sized guide designed for parents with young children.

Chomp - leaflet designed for 7-11 year olds. It explains how the foods you eat affect your teeth.

Tel: 020 7395 4030

www.milk.co.uk/publications/default.aspx

Cancer Research UK

Open up to mouth cancer leaflet.

www.cancerresearchuk.org



Production Team:

Lisa Brownbridge, Oral Health Co-ordinator	Tel: 01609 764109
Siobhan Grant, Consultant in Dental Public Health	Tel: 01845 573848
Philippa Press, Health Improvement Manager	Tel: 01904 724118
Jacqui Fox, Public Health Information Specialist	Tel: 01756 701765
Gillian Rosser, Dental Therapist	Tel: 01723 342742

NHS North Yorkshire and York
Skipton Hospital, Keighley Road, Skipton, BD23 2RJ
Tel: 01756 701765 Fax: 01756 709913
www.northyorkshireandyork.nhs.uk

Policy context

1 Department of Health, 2007. Delivering Better Oral Health: An evidence based toolkit for prevention.
www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_078742

National Collaborating Centre for Acute Care. 2004. Dental Recall: Recall intervals between routine dental examinations.
www.rcseng.ac.uk/surgical_research_units/nccac/guidelines/dent_recall.html

NICE, London 2004. Dental Recall—Recall interval between routine dental examinations.
www.nice.org.uk/Guidance/CG19

The Oral Health Strategy for North Yorkshire and York will be published in 2009.

Websites

Department of Health

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Aboutus/Chiefprofessionalofficers/Chiefdentallofficer/DH_4138822



Information about dental public health in the NHS, improvements in oral health over the past 30 years, the Government's oral health plan for England and guidance for strategic health authorities on water fluoridation.

British Dental Health Foundation

www.dentalhealth.org.uk/



Leading UK based independent charity working to bring about improved oral health care.

NHS Choices

www.nhs.uk/Livewell/dentalhealth/Pages/Dentalhome.aspx



Information on all aspects of dental health.

Clinical Knowledge Summaries

www.cks.library.nhs.uk/information_for_patients#-325267



Practical & reliable information about common conditions which helps healthcare professionals make evidence-based decisions about the healthcare of their patients.

National Oral Health Promotion Group

www.nohpg.org

Forum for all professionals interested in the promotion of oral health.



NLH Oral Health Specialist Library

www.library.nhs.uk/oralhealth

The library is designed to encourage and assist the use of evidence in practice.

