Dear Patient,

We hope that you and those closest to you are keeping safe and well during these challenging times. We would like to thank you for your continued support and cooperation, we are sorry that we are currently unable to offer you our usual services.

We want to assure you that our patients’ safety, as well as the safety of our staff are our main priority. We constantly update our protocols and adhere to daily guidelines issued by NHS & Public Health England. We aim to re-open and operate normally as soon as it is safe to do so. We are only a phone call away if you require emergency dental advice whilst we are closed for routine appointments. When calling the practice, please follow the instructions on our recorded message. One of our dentists will return your call and offer advice and possible prescription over the phone. For certain significant dental emergencies, NHS England has set up dedicated dental emergency hubs for urgent treatment that when required, you will be referred to one of these hubs for further treatment. If you are unsure about anything that concerns you, please do not hesitate to call us and we will be more than happy to advise you accordingly.

We have put together some useful advice listed below. These can help you to maintain healthy teeth & gums.

Please take care and stay safe,

With kind regards and best wishes, from your practice team.
What is a dental emergency?

NOT URGENT – MAY NEED TO WAIT
- Loose or lost crowns, bridges or veneers
- Broken, rubbing or loose dentures
- Bleeding gums
- Broken, loose or lost fillings
- Chipped teeth with no pain
- Loose orthodontic wires

URGENT DENTAL APPOINTMENT:
- Dental and soft-tissue infections.
- Severe dental & facial pain: that is, pain that cannot be controlled by over the counter pain killers.
- Fractured teeth or tooth with pulpal (nerve) exposure.
- Trauma including facial/oral laceration and/or dentoalveolar (jawbone) injuries, for example avulsion of a permanent tooth.
- Swelling of the mouth and face that is significant and worsening
- Post extraction bleeding that the patient is not able to control with local measures (biting on a gauze under pressure over the socket).
- Dental conditions that have resulted in acute systematic illness or raised temperature as a result of a dental infection.
- Severe trismus (limited jaw opening).
- Mouth & facial conditions that are likely to exacerbate systemic medical conditions such as diabetes.

STRAIGHT TO A&E
- Uncontrollable dental haemorrhage following extractions.
- Rapidly increasing swelling around the throat or eye.
- Trauma confined to the dental arches.
Accessing Care

If you have a dental emergency, please call the practice where one of our dentists will be able to give you advice over the phone.

IF YOU NEED ACCESS TO EMERGENCY DENTAL CARE:

- Have you or anyone in your household been self-isolating?
- Do you have any of the COVID-19 symptoms?
- Do you have a temperature of 37.8 or above or have a continuous cough?

If **YES** to any of the above, **CALL 111**. They will direct you to an emergency dental facility where staff have the appropriate protective equipment to treat you safely.
FOR DENTAL PAIN: Use over the counter pain killers for treating any dental pain.

TREATING DENTAL PAIN WITH PRESENT COVID-19 SYMPTOMS: The evidence surrounding Ibuprofen and COVID-19 symptoms is currently being reviewed. However, patients who are a possible or confirmed case, and their household contacts, should take paracetamol in preference to ibuprofen.


Always read the instructions and follow them. Taking more than the accepted dose will not improve your symptoms and make you ill. Taking too many tablets can cause serious stomach and liver injury.
Oral Hygiene

- Brush for at least 2 minutes, twice a day using a fluoride toothpaste (it should contain at least 1,350 parts per million fluoride).
- Children of all ages can use family toothpaste, as long it contains 1,350 to 1,500ppm fluoride.
- Children under the age of 3 should use just a smear of toothpaste. Children aged 3-6 should use a pea-size amount.
- You should brush your teeth last thing before bed and at one other time during the day.
- When brushing, your toothbrush should be placed at a 45-degree angle towards your gums, making sure to brush along your gum margin as well as all tooth surfaces.
- After brushing, spit out any excess. Don’t rinse with water or mouthwash straight after brushing. This will wash away the concentrated fluoride in the remaining toothpaste and reduce its preventative effects.

- If you consume acidic foods & drinks, including fruit, juices & fizzy drinks, wait up to 2 hours before your brush your teeth. Acidic foods & drinks will soften your enamel. Brushing straight away will damage your enamel while it’s in its weakened state.
- Floss daily using dental floss, floss picks or interdental brushes. If you don’t floss, around 35% of the tooth is left untouched. Flossing therefore helps prevent decay developing in between your teeth & helps prevent gum disease.
- Never use toothpicks to remove food trapped in between your teeth as you can damage your gums, use floss instead.
- If you wear a dentures, be sure to clean them & your remaining teeth least twice a day. Dentures can be cleaned by using a soft bristled brush and a nonabrasive denture cleaner to remove food & plaque.
Lost Crowns

- Clean & check the crown. If the crown is mostly hollow, you can try to re-cement it at home if you feel confident to do so. Dental first aid kits such as DenTek or Recapit cement are available from Boots & Superdrug online. **DO NOT USE SUPERGLUE OR ANY DOMESTIC ADHESIVE TO FIT YOUR CROWN.**

- Remove any debris from the crown so that it sits properly and clean your tooth thoroughly as well.

- Check the crown fits without cement. Does the bite feel correct? If the tooth feels too tall, it’s not fitting correctly. **NEVER** force a crown or post onto your tooth; this can cause the root to fracture. If you can’t get the crown to fit, don’t panic. Keep the tooth clean and avoid sweet, acidic, hot & cold substances on that side of the mouth. Clean and protect the exposed tooth as best as you can until the practice opens again.

- Once you have tried placing the crown, dry the tooth & crown with cotton wool or a clean cloth. Mix the cement as instructed on the packet and fill the crown. Place the crown directly onto the tooth and press firmly with finger to make sure it is seating fully & correctly, then bite it into place.

- Wipe away any extra cement around the crown and the gums.

If the crown doesn’t fit easily, don’t force it. Be meticulous with your cleaning and wait until the practice opens for routine appointments to see your dentist.
Managing toothache

Antibiotics will not help with sensitivity. Usually, extreme sensitivity means that there is decay which must be removed and filled. These at-home measures may help make symptoms manageable until care can be arranged.

- Regular cleaning with fluoride toothpaste after meals.
- Desensitising/sensitive toothpaste (like Sensodyne repair & protect). Rub the toothpaste directly on the affected area and brush & clean. Do not rinse afterwards.
- Reduce sugar intake to stop the decay worsening.
- If there is a hole/crack in the tooth, a temporary filling can be packed into the space. These are widely available from supermarkets & pharmacies.
- Anaesthetic gel such as Orajel can also be beneficial in some instances, such as pain from mouth ulcers.
Wisdom Tooth Pain

Wisdom tooth pain is usually due to inflammation of the gum over the erupting tooth, which can be worsened by trauma from biting. Most flare ups should settle in a few days to a week, and can be managed with good care at home.

- Excellent cleaning, even if it is painful to brush. The area must be kept clean to encourage healing.
- Corsodyl mouthwash (can cause tooth staining, this however can be resolved by the hygienist when the practice opens again).
- Soft diet, soft food will reduce trauma to the inflamed gum over the wisdom tooth.
- Painkillers (always follow the instructions on the packet).
- Warm salt water mouthwash.

If you have difficulty swallowing, swelling in your face or cheek or difficulty opening your mouth, call your dentist. You may need antibiotics and possibly admission to A&E if an infection is spreading.
Bleeding gums are usually a sign of gingivitis, or gum disease. The condition is caused by plaque (bacteria) building up on the teeth and gums. This causes inflammation which can lead to swelling, bad breath, tooth loss and/or soreness.

Gum disease often starts with no signs or symptoms but causes up to a third of adult tooth loss in the UK.

**YOUR GUMS WILL NOT RECOVER UNLESS ORAL HYGIENE IMPROVES**

- Brush your teeth at least twice a day & floss daily to clean in between each tooth.
- When you brush, brush your gums as well, paying extra attention to the areas that bleed. After brushing & flossing, a warm salt water mouth wash will help to repair and speed up the healing of your inflamed gums.
Useful Links

Oral Health Organisation – Prevention & Advice

Tepe Interdental Brushes – Tips & Advice

Oral B – How to Brush & Floss

Oral B – Using an Electric Toothbrush
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UXAivWbnOw