

# Smile talk



## make this a fun and festive season

It seems the holiday season starts earlier and earlier each year. As hard as you might try to plan, it's always here before you know it. Make a list of all the tasks that need to be done and prioritize them. Place items that have to be taken care of by a deadline, e.g. before you leave for the holidays or by the 24th December, at the top of the list and work your way down.

Taking care of yourself should be the highest priority on that list. An overtired and stressed individual puts extra pressure on the body and increases anxiety in the home and office. Get enough sleep, watch your diet, take time to exercise and spend a few extra minutes in a hot shower. This will calm your body and mind and help reduce your stress levels.

Most importantly don't forget to take care of your smile. Make sure it will be ready for all the holiday photos. Make an appointment with your dentist for a check-up - a simple cleaning can make all the difference. Better still, treat yourself to a whitening treatment to ensure a really sparkling smile this holiday season. Teeth whitening is also a great gift idea for a spouse or special friend.

Just a few adjustments to your schedule and allowing some time for yourself, might make this a truly festive season and not just a hectic holiday.

## looking younger

With all the makeover shows on television, new anti-aging products and general obsession with staying younger, it is no surprise that people are willing to splurge on products and procedures to look and feel younger. One quick and easy way to take years off your appearance is to keep your teeth as white as possible. A brilliant smile goes a long way to keeping you looking fresh and youthful.

As we age, our teeth naturally lose their whiteness. The bony tissue that underlies the tooth enamel gets darker and the light can't pass through our teeth the way it once could resulting in 'yellow looking' teeth.

Teeth can also become discoloured simply from what we eat and drink. Tea, coffee, red wine and cigarettes are the worst offenders. They change the colour of our teeth because the outer most layer of the tooth contains pores that can retain these stains.

Whitening toothpastes may be somewhat effective in removing surface stains. However, be careful, they may contain strong abrasives that can destroy the tooth enamel, particularly if used for extended periods of time. No toothpastes are effective for discolouration on the inner layers of your teeth caused by natural aging.

To further lighten your teeth, your dentist can recommend a number of different treatments.

**Whitening** - you can choose between take home kits where the dentist fits you with custom made trays and whitening gel or in-office accelerated whitening which is a 2 hour procedure performed by the dentist.



**Tooth bonding** - an enamel like material is applied to the tooth's surface. This technique can also be used to repair chipped or damaged teeth.

**Porcelain Veneers** - thin porcelain shells are glued onto the surface of your front teeth and are ideal for hiding badly stained or discoloured teeth.

**Tooth coloured fillings** - a good start is replacing those unsightly silver fillings. A range of white filling materials are now available.

**Crowns** - are recommended when the actual tooth structure is damaged and needs extra strength and support.

Consult with your dentist to determine which options best suit you. While the appearance of the teeth is one of the most important contributors to facial beauty, it is often the most neglected. Having healthy white teeth is something you can enjoy and will help you to look more youthful - and why shouldn't you look and feel the best you can!



**Dr Hal Kussick**  
D.D.S. (Washington, USA)

We are pleased to introduce an American dentist to our team - Dr Hal Kussick from Seattle, Washington. Dr Kussick graduated from the University of Washington in 1993 and has worked for the last 12 years at Aesthetic Dental Associates in Seattle before relocating to Singapore. His main area of expertise is cosmetic work including porcelain veneers, tooth bonding, teeth whitening, crowns, bridges and implant restorations.

## happy holidays

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas,  
Selamat Hari Raya, Happy Hanukkah,  
Happy New Year and Gong Xi Fa Cai!



Please note our Dental Excellence and Smile Focus clinics will be operating on reduced sessions between Dec 24th and Jan 1st however there will always be a dentist on call for emergencies. Regular hours will resume from Jan 2nd 2006.

## vitamin deficiencies



The next visit to the dentist may not be just about brushing and flossing but also a reminder to eat more broccoli and strawberries. The mouth is often the first place to show signs of vitamin deficiencies. Your dentist can identify oral problems and help to determine whether a vitamin deficiency is the cause.

Lack of Vitamin B is a common vitamin deficiency that can involve your mouth and teeth. The tongue feels swollen and you may experience trouble with swallowing. The inside of the cheek can also be affected; the tissue can be pale and may break apart easily and slough off. A deficiency in folic acid, also in the vitamin B group, can result in a burning sensation in the mouth, especially on the tongue. When there is a severe B12 or folic acid deficiency the body can show other symptoms including numbness, tingling limbs and gastrointestinal problems. Folic acid is also critical to healthy fetal development during early pregnancy.

Meat, milk, nuts, and enriched grains are good sources for B vitamins. If you or a family member are concerned that you are not meeting your recommended vitamin requirements, discuss it with your physician or dentist at your next appointment. Eating a balanced diet is the best protection in keeping a strong body and mind and a healthy mouth.

Here are common sources of B Vitamins:

**Thiamin (B1)** - Pork, liver, whole and enriched grains, legumes, nuts

**Riboflavin (B2)** - Milk and milk products, eggs, meats, broccoli, whole and enriched grains

**Niacin (B3)** - Protein-rich foods, such as milk, eggs, meat, poultry fish, nuts, whole and enriched grains

**Pyroxidine (B6)** - Meat, poultry, fish, leafy green vegetables, bananas, enriched grains, legumes

**Cobalamin (B12)** - Fish, meat, poultry, milk and milk products, eggs, fortified cereals

**Folic acid (also called folate)** - Leafy green vegetables, oranges, legumes, broccoli, asparagus, fortified cereals

## did you know?

### Why toothpaste comes in a tube?

Prior to WWII, toothpaste was packaged in small lead canisters. The inside of the canisters were coated with plastic once it was revealed that lead from the canisters often leaked into the toothpaste. It was the shortage of lead and other metals during WWII that ushered in the plastic toothpaste tube we are familiar with today.

## announcements

We have started a new system for appointment reminders - sending SMS text to hand phones. We would appreciate if you could send a quick reply to the text or call either one of our clinics to reconfirm that you will be attending the appointment. We understand this might not be the best method for all our patients. If you prefer a phone call, please let us know so we can put your preference in our computer system.

## for your information



Dr Ong, our Paedodontist, is particularly skilled in managing difficult or nervous children. She is also very experienced in treating handicapped or disabled children. Sometimes it is hard to schedule the correct amount of time as it depends on how compliant these children will be. We would like to thank her general patients for their acceptance if she is running late. We know everyone's time is important and kindly appreciate your understanding regarding this matter.