



## remember your smile

Christmas and New Year's Eve have passed and now preparations are gearing up for Chinese New Year. No time to relax. However, with the children back at school, visiting family and friends having vacated the spare room and life returning to a semblance of normality, it is finally time to evaluate how your body has survived the holiday madness. Something that tends to get neglected during this very busy period is our dental health. Not brushing or flossing as often as we should, or delaying our regular dental check ups can have a long term effect on teeth and gums. And don't forget that the red wine, coffee and tea we drank with friends whilst socialising over the holiday period, can discolour our teeth. So perhaps now is the time to schedule an appointment with your dentist to take care of your smile. You can also visit our website at [www.smilefocus.com.sg](http://www.smilefocus.com.sg) to make an appointment request online.

# smiletalk

## stop snoring-start sleeping



**Dr Elaine Ng**  
B.D.S. (Singapore)

Many of us tend to associate snoring with being overly tired or perhaps too much red wine (and Christmas/New Year is certainly a time for both). What many of us do not consider, however, is whether our snoring is symptomatic of something else; a potential health problem.

While most of us snore occasionally, chronic snoring can be a warning sign of a more serious problem, in particular, Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA), [Apnoea is Greek for "without breath"]. In this condition you stop breathing for short intervals throughout the night (10 seconds or longer) causing the oxygen levels in your blood to fall and the carbon dioxide levels to rise. This can happen 20 to 30 times or more each hour, all night long.

Research has shown that 1 out of 3 heavy snorers experience severe sleep apnoea. Children too, can suffer from this chronic problem. Many sufferers of OSA may not be aware they have the condition. The symptoms can include:

- Extreme fatigue despite a long night's sleep, leading to daytime sleepiness and poor concentration/memory loss
- Morning headaches
- Gasping during sleep

The side effects of this condition can include high blood pressure, impotence, depression and irritability, all leading to a reduced quality of life.

People with OSA may not be aware that their sleep was interrupted. In fact, many people with this type of sleep apnoea think they sleep well all night. Their partners will probably have a different view ... they will sleep an average of 2 hours less than those whose partners do not snore!

One solution may be for the snorer to use a special appliance while sleeping. Custom made to fit (similar to a mouthguard) the device is designed to bring the lower jaw forward, thereby preventing the tongue from dropping into the airway and ensuring sufficient oxygen is obtained while sleeping. These appliances are inexpensive, easy to use and are effective for mild to moderate sleep apnoea.

For more information on screening for, and treatment of, Obstructive Sleep Apnoea, consult with your dentist. **It is never too late to really get a really good night's sleep.**





## a welcome return



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

Smilefocus is very happy to welcome back to the practice Dr Hal Kussick. Dr Kussick is located at Smilefocus Cosmetic on the 8th floor of Camden Medical Centre. After returning to the United States this summer, he decided that the allure of Asia and Singapore in particular, was too hard to resist and so he has decided to make Singapore his home for the foreseeable future. He will continue his work as a general dentist with a special interest in Cosmetic Dentistry.

Prior to returning to Singapore Dr Kussick decided to combine a personal challenge with raising funds for a worthwhile cause. On 19th October 2007 he set off on a solo bicycle ride across Australia. Starting the arduous 4,026 km journey from Perth (west coast) he arrived in Sydney (east coast) 25 days later on 13th November. With the occasional tailwind Dr Kussick made good time and met quite a few interesting characters in the country towns of Australia.

Whilst raising thousands of dollars for 'The Lake Clinic' located on the Tonle Sap Lake in Cambodia, it was also a "personal commitment to help many people who have very little". The largest lake in S.E. Asia, on its waters are dozens of floating villages which, together with the population living along its shores, number some tens of thousands of people who have virtually no access to modern health care of any kind. The goal of The Lake Clinic is to provide free, basic health care to these people, including medical, dental and public health services.

With Dr Kussick's help The Lake Clinic is well on its way to making that goal a reality. Visit [www.lakeclinic.org](http://www.lakeclinic.org) to see pictures of Dr Kussick's trip and to read of the work the charity is doing.

## did you know?

Studies have shown that tea has anti-decay properties! And the reason? The tannins in the tea! A recent report found that the tannins prevent bacteria from attaching to the surface of the tooth, thereby prohibiting up to 85% of decay-causing bacteria from feeding on the tooth. Researchers discovered the unique properties of tannin while studying the chewing sticks some Nigerian tribes use to clean their teeth. Because they had little tooth decay, researchers expected to find a fluoride-like component in the sticks. Instead they found the benefits of tannins. More good news is that tannins are also found in apples, chocolates and beer!

## announcements

Dr Patricia Hancock and Dr Christina Liew have relocated to our Smilefocus Family clinic on the 14th floor of Camden Medical Centre. Both Dr Hancock and Dr Liew will continue to see their existing patients and continue practicing general dentistry as they have always done.



We said goodbye to Dr Florence Li in November 2007.

Valet Parking is now available at Camden Medical Centre. For \$5 (excluding parking fee) your car will be parked for you at The Regent Hotel. Patients are reminded that the other nearest car parks are Tanglin Mall and the Traders Hotel.



smilefocus

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