



**Bite**

# Word of mouth

3 DEC 2011

## Featured

# A lump & bump check could be a life saver

With each visit to Bite, we plan our time to include a thorough check for oral cancer. No one likes to hear the word 'cancer' much less think about it, but would it make you feel better to know that a simple, safe, painless exam can detect abnormalities at an early stage, when the treatments are relatively easy & outcomes are good? We thought so.

### Who's at risk

While we can't predict whether one person will develop oral cancer & another will not, there are recognised risk factors for this disease. At the top of the list are tobacco (including 'smokeless' chewing tobaccos & snuff) & alcohol use. The risk increases with the increased frequency of use. Overall, use of tobacco, alcohol or both accounts for three out of every four oral cancers. In tropical areas of South & Southeast Asia, including Australia, the tradition and practice of chewing the areca, or 'betel' nut is yet another risk factor.

Exposure to sun can increase risk for cancers on the lip, although this risk can be easily reduced by use of sunscreen and wearing



a shady hat. Some studies indicate that a diet lacking in fruits and vegetables can increase your oral cancer risk. Research is also going on to determine whether certain infectious agents such as human papilloma virus are implicated in oral cancer.

In Australia, these risk factors add up to approximately 2,500 new cases of oral cancer being identified each year. The prevalence is higher among men than woman—about 1/100 men versus 1/200 women will be diagnosed with oral cancer at some point in their lives. As with other developing countries in the world, Australia's incidence of oral cancer has increased in recent years.

The best early warning system—YOU

Unusual mouth changes could have simple causes however early

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### This month...

*We discuss lumps and bumps that are important to check for. It's an important consideration as prevention and early detection leads to much more successful treatment and happier mouths. We give you the list of things to look out for, to help you become your own best early warning system.*

*We also review whitening toothpastes; let you in on our opening hours across the Christmas / New Year break; and introduce you to our fabulous team member Lyn-maree*  
Enjoy!

*Dr Simon Franks*



> continued

detection of more serious disease is crucial to a good outcome. Both regular personal & professional checks are encouraged. Contact Bite for further consultation if you notice any of these:

- Any mouth sore or lesion that does not heal within two weeks;
- Lumps or thickened areas in the cheek;
- Discolored (red or white) patches in the mouth;
- Difficulty with chewing, swallowing or moving the tongue;
- Numbness in your tongue or mouth;
- Chronic hoarseness, sore throat or a feeling that something is caught in your throat;
- Swelling in the jaw; denture wearers might notice that the dentures don't fit or become uncomfortable.

### Poking tongues

A good oral cancer exam does require a hands-on approach, and in reality takes only two minutes of visual and tactile testing. Some of our patients will have already experienced the tongue grab with a piece of gauze! Yes, it does feel a bit weird but it's the only way to accurately check under your tongue and give you peace of mind. The aim is to use early detection and treatment to prevent big problems later on.

At Bite Dental, we are that vigilant about protecting your health & saving lives.



Bite celebrates community & everyday heroes. Let us know if you have a cause you'd like us to shout about.

### Profile

#### Lyn-maree: Receptionist



Lyn-maree has been with Bite Dental for a year and a half, working with both Dr. Dennis Krafft and Dr. Simon Franks. She always has a warm welcome when you walk through the door, and enjoys getting to know our patients on a personal level. Apart from booking all your appointments and making sure that

we run on time Lyn-maree is planning on doing her Certificate III in Dental Assisting next year to understand more about the clinical and sterilization procedures involved in dentistry.

### Bite News

#### Holiday hours

Bite Dental will be closed from Christmas Eve, reopening on Tuesday 3 January.



### Handy Hint

#### Do whitening toothpastes work?

“Whitening toothpastes contain mild abrasives plus additional polishing agents & special chemicals. Think of it as tooth JIF—scouring off superficial stains. Though teeth can appear lighter, whitening pastes don't actually 'bleach' your teeth. It's important to note that these do not penetrate the inner-most layer which is the basis for your individual tooth colour. Whitening toothpastes can be useful for people who smoke, drink coffee/tea & eat staining foods. Providing you understand their purpose, they can be helpful in preventing subsequent stain build up following a bleaching course.”





**BRING IN THE KIDS BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS**

Remember, Bite Caps the Gap at \$20 out of pocket for all kids exams, x-rays & cleans

CAP  
the  
GAP

Visit the Bite Dental website to receive our email newsletter which includes regular health tips plus exclusive savings and offers from Bite Dental and our community.

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