



**Bite**

# Word of mouth

12 OCT 2012

## Featured

# Shining the light on tooth fractures

Teeth are strong - and by practicing good home care with regular, professional cleanings and check-ups, you're working to keep them strong! But however diligent you may be at using these procedures, thus protecting your teeth cavities and erosion, we still can't guarantee that accidents won't happen. And, unfortunately, accidents can lead to fractured teeth.

Fractured teeth are the second leading cause of tooth loss in adults, with the first being periodontal or gum disease. There are several things that can cause teeth to chip, fracture or break. You may inadvertently bite down on something hard. Sports injuries, and accidents such as falling, being hit in the mouth, or being involved in traumas such as an car accident, can break and crack teeth.

Also, large cavities may lead to 'more cavity than tooth' and the resulting thin shell of tooth is vulnerable to cracking and breaking.

How will I know if I get a tooth fracture?

You'll know if your tooth breaks severely enough to expose the sensitive

inner material and nerve - it will hurt! The pain however may come and go. It can be extremely sensitive to hot or cold drinks, or being exposed to air. The pain increases when you chew and put pressure on the tooth. You may also feel the sharp edge of the broken tooth with your tongue. If you experience any of these unfortunate events, please make an emergency appointment to begin the correction and repair process.



Many tooth fractures, however, do not hurt - and this is where the trouble comes in. Tiny, hairline fractures that don't enter the sensitive part of the teeth often go undetected. Over time, these fractures can form areas for bacteria

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## This month...

...we delve into tooth fractures – what causes them and the importance of catching 'tiny' problems early.

Also, Jenna discusses the best time for daily brushing.

If you missed our new 'client only' offer last month, we list the details for our new loyalty programme. You'll love it.

We've also launched our new look website. Its now much more comprehensive and even has an online chat so that you can directly ask questions or make a booking with Lyn-maree.

We hope you enjoy our October issue.

Dr Simon Franks



> continued

to collect and begin the all-too-familiar process of producing acids that lead to tooth decay. Since any fracture is capable of going deeper, the existence of undetected fractures sets you up for a broken-tooth-waiting-to-happen. So often, these things will also happen at the worst possible time. Like the start of a long holiday weekend.

The key, then, is to find and correct these little cracks before they become big ones. This is easier said than done. X-rays can't be used to detect fractures like those in bones, so they are often missed. Fortunately there's a new, non-invasive approach called transillumination.

This long word literally means 'shining the light through', and it's something we do with every examination at Bite Dental.

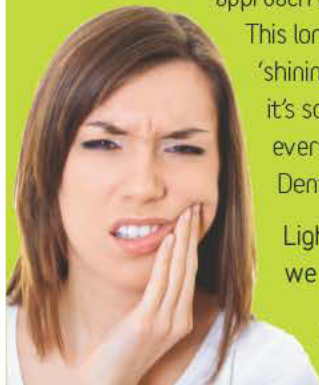
Light helps us find it, so we can fix it

As a kid, did you ever

play with a flashlight on an overnight camping trip? Remember how the light could shine through parts of your hands, or produce weird-looking shadows and effects (and a nice atmosphere for ghost stories) when angled on your face? In a sense, what you were doing was transilluminating!

The same principle holds in the dentist's office (but without the ghost stories). A small, high-intensity light is used to illuminate the teeth. Any small, undetected fractures, such as the ones we've discussed above, can easily be seen with this technique. Once found at this early stage, very often the crack or chip can be repaired with no risk of losing the tooth. This is so much easier than waiting for your tooth to start hurting or fall apart when the risk of losing the tooth becomes very real.

At Bite Dental, where we believe that 'a stitch in time saves nine', our examination procedures rely on the power of light to find little problems. That way, we can fix them before they get big!



**Special Offer**

Put a spring in your step and brighten up your smile!

Join our Whitening Loyalty Programme.

Now \$150 (not \$650) will whiten your teeth and get you an additional tube of maintenance gel at your regular appointments with Jenna.

Check out our new website for more details on how it works or speak to Jenna about it at your next appointment.



*New website now live - check it out*

*Healthy Hygiene Hints*

**MORNING or NIGHT? That is the question...**

I ask people when they brush their teeth—most people tend to say in the morning—mainly due to the dreaded morning breath we do not wish to cast upon others! However if you routinely brush your teeth only once a day, the best time to do this is actually before bed.

When we sleep our saliva glands turn off, which is our first defence against decay. So if we leave our whole days' worth of bacteria & food bits in our mouths for eight hours without the protection of saliva, the bugs have an all-night, undisturbed party in there! And this is where problems start.

Technically, plaque does not become damaging for 24hrs so it is okay to only brush once a day—but it must be done before bed! (Though I'm sure your work colleagues & loved ones would prefer you without the morning breath as well!)

*Jenna*



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