

Importance of having a regular dental examination

At the end of your dental treatment, your dentist may advise you to come in for a comprehensive examination on a regular basis. Why is this and what is the importance of regular 'check-up'?

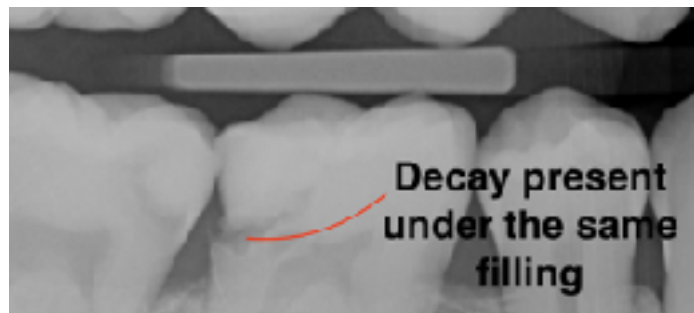
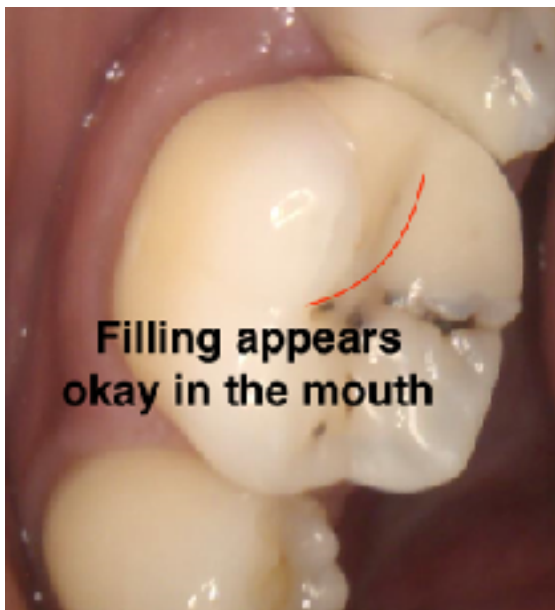
There are many things that a dentist would check during an examination. As well as doing a thorough clean of your teeth and advise on your dental hygiene i.e. how well you are brushing and flossing, we check to make sure your oral conditions are healthy and functional.

Decay

This is the most common dental disease we see. Decay is caused by the bacteria in your mouth fermenting on the sugar in your diet, then producing acid which weakens and damages the tooth structure.

Sometimes it can be symptomless until it reaches the pulp or the 'nerve' of the tooth or until the whole tooth is infected resulting in abscess formation.

Occasionally it is not noticeable as it can slowly develop under an existing filling or on the side of a tooth which will only show up on an x-ray.



Case scenario: *Patient presented without any symptoms, however under a filling which appears fine in the mouth has a large decay, visible on the x-ray.*

When this is detected early either visually or radiographically, a simple filling will stop the decay from getting larger and restore the function of the tooth painlessly.

However once it is extensive, it can lead to a toothache and may require root canal treatment to restore the function or even the need for the tooth to be extracted to get rid off the toothache or infection!

Tooth wear/ chips/ cracks

Most of the time the chips or wear of the teeth are caused by trauma i.e. a fall or even from brushing too hard. However there will be times when the cause is from how you are biting or when you have an old filling in a tooth.

It is most effective to have the issue diagnosed and treated before it propagates as when it is left to progress it can lead to further problems in the future.



Case scenario: Teeth with large fillings; either metal or white can be prone to fracture as shown

Gum disease

Some bacteria in the mouth can produce toxins, which along with calcium deposits or tartar build-up can lead to bleeding gums and gum disease. Tartar build-up occurs naturally as the saliva contains calcium ions which get deposited on the plaque and it causes the plaque to harden, leading to the harbouring of bacteria under the hardened plaque or tartar.

Therefore it is important to have the build-up removed regularly to reduce the bacteria load in the mouth. Once the bacteria load build up to a certain threshold, it can cause the recession of the bone around the teeth, effectively reducing the bone level and resulting in teeth to become loose or even fall out!



Case scenario: Bacteria infection of the gums can lead to gum and bone recession and this can result in unsightly long appearance of the teeth and loosening of teeth

If the teeth are to be healthy and strong, it is therefore important to keep the gums healthy by regularly having a clean done at the dentist.

Other conditions

There are things which are less common but not less important that we would check during your examination visit. They include infections or conditions of the soft tissue such as ulcers, oral lesions and oral cancer. We will advise on how to minimise future occurrence and any treatment you should receive or appropriate referral.

In children, we will check for tongue ties, tonsils and teeth developments which impacts the growth and future of your child. Therefore it is best to have such conditions diagnosed and treated early for a successful and desirable outcome.

If you have any questions or concerns, please give our friendly team a call to make an appointment and we will be more than happy to answer your queries.