

Word of Mouth



Myth busting providing crystal clear evidence

Winter 2026

A recent BBC article titled 'Why brushing teeth twice a day is not always best' has sparked debate – and spread misleading messages about how to look after our teeth that we would like to set straight.

While a few points were accurate, much of the information was unclear, incomplete or simply incorrect, which risks undermining one of the most basic and important habits for a healthy mouth.

Our clinicians have joined forces with the UK's leading dental health charity, the Oral Health Foundation to ensure evidence-based facts are shared - primarily that brushing twice a day with fluoride toothpaste is not optional – it's one of the most effective ways to prevent tooth decay and gum disease.

Claim: Brushing once well is better than twice quickly.

The evidence says: Brush your teeth last thing at night and at one other time during the day using fluoride toothpaste. Brushing twice a day with fluoride toothpaste remains essential – once a day simply isn't enough to prevent decay and gum disease.

Claim: Brush before breakfast, not after.

The evidence says: Brush before breakfast when you can – or wait 30 minutes after eating. Brushing before breakfast coats your teeth with fluoride, forming a protective layer against the acids in foods and drinks.

Claim: Don't rinse after brushing.

This claim is misleading and doesn't reflect

the full evidence. You should never rinse with water straight after brushing – it washes away the fluoride your teeth need for protection. But that doesn't mean avoiding mouthwash. In fact, a fluoride mouthwash can be a valuable part of your daily routine.

Claim: Expensive toothpaste isn't better.

This is far too simplified. Any toothpaste with fluoride (1,350-1550ppm) will protect your teeth but specialist pastes can help if you have particular dental concerns.

The article also touched on flossing and

'rubber' interdental brushes, but this too is not grounded in science. The best evidence supports interdental brushes – whichever size and material fits comfortably. Clean between your teeth daily with interdental brushes – they're the most effective way to remove plaque and protect your gums.

Regular dental visits are essential

While caring for your teeth properly at home is vital - regular visits to your dental team are essential. We are best placed to identify any issues promptly, which you may have trouble spotting yourself. So, please don't skip your routine visits, book with us today!



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Spotlight: on mouth ulcers

Mouth ulcers are painful sores that appear inside the mouth. They are different from cold sores, which appear on the outer lips and are caused by a virus. Mouth ulcers cannot be caught by kissing, or by sharing drinks and utensils.

Usually, a single mouth ulcer is due to damage caused by biting the cheek or tongue, or by sharp teeth, brushing or poorly fitting dentures.

Minor ulcers can appear inside the cheeks, and on the lips, tongue and gums and, more rarely, on the roof of the mouth. They are usually the size of the top of a pencil and can sometimes come in clusters. You can get 4-6 at any one time.

Large ulcers are more severe and can take longer to heal. Any ulcer that lasts longer than 3 weeks should be checked by your dentist. Large ulcers may appear near the tonsils and can be very painful, especially when you swallow. You usually only get one at a time in this location.

Infections can cause mouth ulcers. Herpes simplex often causes mouth ulcers in children and some adults. Other less common viral and bacterial infections may cause mouth ulcers, but this is rare. They can be caused by anaemia and occasionally by other blood disorders, and some skin or gastrointestinal diseases.



Sometimes the mouth ulcers are the only sign of an underlying disease, so please don't ignore them.

Cancer of the mouth can first appear as a mouth ulcer. The ulcers caused by mouth cancer are usually single and last a long time without any obvious nearby cause (for example a sharp tooth). Any ulcer that lasts longer than three weeks should be looked at by your dentist. Ulcers caused by cancer usually appear on or under the tongue,

but may occasionally appear somewhere else in the mouth. Cancer of the mouth is usually linked to heavy smoking and drinking. Doing both together greatly increases the risk.

Treatment depends on the cause of the ulcers. Sometimes all that is needed is for a sharp tooth to be smoothed down or a denture adjusted, although some patients may need mouthwashes or tablets.

You may be able to reduce the risk of mouth ulcers by keeping your mouth as clean and healthy as possible, using high-quality toothbrushes (to reduce the risk of damage to your mouth) and eating a good diet that is rich in vitamins A, C and E, and includes foods such as fresh fruit and vegetables (to lessen the risk of mouth cancer). **Get in touch if you have any concerns.**

We're here to help spot mouth cancer

The latest figures on mouth cancer revealed by NHS England do not make for positive reading. We would like to help balance the data with a promise that we are here to help spot this disease as early as possible and, in doing so, help save lives.

We all lead such busy lives and sometimes crossing your fingers and hoping that lingering ulcer will go away, or that red patch in your mouth will clear up on its own feel like sensible options. But why put yourself through the anxiety of not knowing?

Book a screening appointment and let us set your mind at rest, or refer you to a specialist if there's cause for concern.

The earlier a dental problem is caught, the easier it tends to be to tackle. Mouth cancer is no exception. The smaller the affected area,

the better the chances are of a full recovery. If in doubt, get checked out.

Mouth cancer diagnoses in England have reached their highest level on record, with experts warning that too many people remain unaware of the early signs of the disease. Our mission is to ensure our patients buck the national trend and are fully informed.

Long lasting ulcers, red or white patches and unusual lumps and bumps are three common warning signs of mouth cancer.

If you are worried about any lumps, bumps, patches or ulcers in your mouth, please get in touch straight away.

Visit www.mouthcancer.org
#MouthCancerAction #Mouthaware for more information.

Practice news

Online booking

Don't forget you can now book your appointments online through our website - just visit www.hagleydentalpractice.co.uk

Text reminders

We recently introduced SMS reminders so you don't miss your appointment - please contact us to make sure your number is up to date.

Spread the word

Our dentists are welcoming new patients thanks to our extension and addition of dental surgeries. New patients can contact us via phone or email to take advantage of our convenient appointment times and no waiting list!

Dream smiles!

Did you know that we offer smile consultations to discuss how to improve your smile? Book now!

Hagley Dental Practice

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Opening hours:

Monday:	8.00am - 4.00pm
Tuesday:	8.30am - 5.30pm
Wednesday:	8.30am - 5.30pm
Thursday:	8.30am - 6.30pm
Friday:	8.00am - 2.00pm

Articles within this newsletter are for information only. It is not our intention to endorse or recommend any specific treatment. You should seek advice and guidance from your dentist when considering any dental treatment or procedure.