

GET ROUGH WITH TOOTH WEAR DURING NATIONAL SMILE MONTH

With National Smile Month held 16th May to 16th June, the Oral Health Foundation has released some fun but nonetheless impactful facts and figures. Did you know, for example, that earrings, business cards, keys, matchsticks and screwdrivers are just a few of the somewhat inexplicable objects patients admit to using to remove food particles from between their teeth?

PUTTING 'WHAT' INTO YOUR MOUTH?

If we put to one side the hygiene aspect of putting any one of these objects into our mouths, their use is particularly worrying when it comes to the issue of tooth wear, which is a growing problem. Comparing the most recent Adult Dental Health Survey with its predecessor, figures suggest that in just 11 years the incidence of tooth wear in England increased by 10%.

Alongside over-zealous tooth brushing and consuming a diet rough in texture, using utensils



not specifically designed for the job of removing food debris interdentally contributes to abrasion.

OTHER PROBLEMS

Patients suffering from tooth wear often experience sensitive teeth, which may look shorter on smiling or when speaking. Patients also often report that chewing may have become a problem. In addition:

- Teeth may become less white as some of the outer surface is lost
- Front teeth may become sharp or chipped
- Chewing surfaces may wear flat and take on a shiny, pitted appearance.
- Restorations such as crowns and bridges may stand proud of the natural teeth.

Since over-enthusiastic tooth brushing can result in abrasion, it is a good idea for the dentist or hygienist to demonstrate how to brush the teeth without being too vigorous and, where appropriate, to recommend the use of a soft toothbrush and non-abrasive toothpaste.

MORE INFORMATION

The London Tooth Wear Centre offers an evidence based and comprehensive approach to managing tooth wear.

To request advice please get in touch

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