

## Not so much tongue tied!

We hope that not too many of our patients will be contemplating having their tongues pierced but they may have young family and friends who are doing so.

Like tattooing piercing is becoming a more prevalent form of body art. However oral piercing, which involve the tongue lips or cheeks can cause adverse medical and dental conditions.

The piercing is usually done with out anaesthetic, and pain and swelling are common side effects of the procedure.

Some patients have had such a large swelling of the tongue that their airway has been closed. Sometimes there is some nerve damage and numbness at the piercing site and of course there is a risk from infection. If the jewellery breaks then the pieces can sometimes be inhaled or swallowed.

Recent study's in the US has shown that of the 52 adults examined with pierced tongues 50% showed quite marked chipping of there teeth and 35% had receding gums. Also restorations can also be damaged if jewellery strikes them.

The jewellery can cause excessive saliva production(drooling) and impede the ability to pronounce words clearly. If the jewellery comes loose it can be inhaled and is therefore a choking hazard.

It is very important that the piercing is carried out at a reputable, licensed establishment. The jewellery must be meticulously cleaned. An anti plaque rinse and brushing around the hole is necessary.

All in all we do not recommend the procedure-stick to ears.

## Dental ABC

### Abscess

An abscess is a localized collection of pus in an enclosed area or space, somewhere within the body. Abscesses may occur around the teeth and jaws, and are often associated with an infection. They are commonly divided into ACUTE or CHRONIC types.

An ACUTE abscess is one which is very active and often painful, and which you will want to seek help for quickly as it will cause you some problems. It may also be associated with some SWELLING and INFLAMMATION.

A CHRONIC abscess may or may not be painful, and is generally a slower abscess to form and to heal. It may also be associated with swelling and inflammation, but is often not so painful as the pus finds a route to drain away in the form of a SINUS.

All abscesses should be treated and we may recommend all or one of the following: OPENING surgically and DRAINING the abscess, ENDODONTIC (root canal) treatment, PERIODONTAL (gum) treatment with surgery or ROOT PLANING, other SURGICAL treatment. Very rarely do we prescribe antibiotics without doing some other treatment as well.

You should not try to treat an abscess at home, as you might exacerbate the problem and spread infection. Seek treatment from the practice as soon as possible

### Help Please!!!!

If you have a dental emergency which needs to be dealt with on that day call us before 10.00 am. This way we can accommodate everyone who needs to be seen as soon as possible. Calling in the afternoon will probably mean leaving the problem to be treated the next day. Also, we close one afternoon each week for essential cleaning and maintenance to the surgery.

**Obviously emergencies due to trauma or a child in pain will be dealt with at any time.**