

Dental ABC

Primary, Deciduous or Baby teeth

These are the 20 teeth of the first dentition, which are shed and replaced, by the permanent adult teeth. They begin to form when the baby is still in the womb, and first appear in the mouth around 6 months of age. The first teeth to appear are usually, but not always the upper incisors and then the posterior or deciduous molars follow the lower front incisors, and these. By the time the child is about two and a half years old, all the deciduous teeth should have 'erupted' or appeared in the mouth, although the timing, sequence and position of the teeth is not always totally predictable.

Many children have difficulty when the baby teeth are erupting, and this may take the form of irritability, sleeplessness, tiredness, areas of slight ulceration in the mouth, and even diarrhoea. There are many preparations available from the dentist, chemist or doctor to help the baby get over this difficult time. The primary teeth are smaller, and of a different shape and form, relative to the adult dentition. They are whiter but also less mineralized than the adult teeth, and this means that they are also more susceptible to decay.

Probe

A periodontal probe is a blunt ended slender instrument used to measure the depth of periodontal pockets. The measurements are usually in millimetres. Bleeding of tissue or the presence of plaque (bacteria) upon probing are also used as guides to

evaluate periodontal health and tooth cleaning.

Prosthodontics

Prosthodontics is that branch of dentistry, which is involved in the restoration, and maintenance of oral function, comfort, appearance, and health of the patient by the replacement of missing teeth or tissues by artificial means. Also called prosthetic dentistry.

A dentist who specializes in this field is called a prosthodontist.

Radiolucent

Radiolucent objects are of low density, absorb radiation and appear as dark grey to black on x-ray film. Some examples of radiolucent objects are pulp, gingiva, and decayed tooth structure.

Radiopaque

Radiopaque objects are of high density and do not absorb radiation. They are viewed as white or light areas on x-ray film. Some examples of radiopaque objects are metal, dense bone, and enamel.

Help Please!!!!

If you have a dental emergency which need 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.