

# Is the daily grind getting to you?

To mark Tooth Wear Awareness Month this October, Professor Andrew Eder considers how tooth wear can affect your teeth and offers simple solutions to the problem

**W**ould you be surprised to learn that being stressed may be affecting not only the health of your teeth but also their appearance?

'Attrition' is characterised by contact between the teeth over and above normal use. It is most frequently seen in people who grind and clench their teeth at night; a stress-relieving mechanism that can become a habit.

Those who do suffer from this activity may complain of tooth sensitivity, problems chewing, headaches and jaw ache. To add insult to injury, when people suffer from sensitivity as a result of tooth wear, how they react has the potential to have far-reaching oral health implications. For example, tooth brushing may become uncomfortable and avoided, or poor food and drink choices may be made, in an attempt to avoid the pain these everyday tasks can trigger.

**The key to good brushing is to be gentle but effective and brush at least twice a day for two minutes**

The good news is that making simple lifestyle changes can decrease your susceptibility to tooth wear:

- Switching off devices, such as a smartphone, an hour before bed
- Avoiding stimulants, such as coffee
- Using essential oils, such as lavender or sandalwood, to relax at night, and rosemary or frankincense to encourage clarity and provide support during the day
- Practising yoga, meditation or mindfulness will assist in maintaining equilibrium so that one learns to cope with external stresses and any



subsequent anxiety more effectively

- Wearing a specific design of mouthguard over your teeth at night, particularly at very stressful times.

## IS YOUR SMILE WEARING THIN?

Another type of tooth wear can occur – abrasion – that can begin if you are over-zealous when you brush your teeth. What happens is that brushing too vigorously can rub away the outer layers of the teeth. Patients suffering from tooth wear often experience sensitivity and report their teeth appear darker.

The key to good brushing is to be gentle but also effective, and to brush twice a day for two minutes. If you are worried about your brushing technique, speak to your dentist or hygienist. They will advise of the best technique for you and recommend an appropriate toothbrush and non-abrasive toothpaste.

## WE CAN HELP

Don't be fooled into thinking this can't possibly happen to you or anyone you

know. Statistics collated by the NHS suggest that over 75% of adults and more than 50% of children are suffering from some type of tooth wear and, if we continue as we are, this is set to get worse; particularly so for adults as we live longer and keep our teeth longer.

The London Tooth Wear Centre® offers a comprehensive approach to managing tooth wear in a professional and friendly environment. It is headed up by Clinical Director Professor Andrew Eder, a Specialist in Restorative Dentistry and Prosthodontics. He is also Professor/Honorary Consultant at the UCL Eastman Dental Institute.

This October, the London Tooth Wear Centre® is offering complimentary tooth wear consultations (while appointments last) as part of its Tooth Wear Awareness Month.

✦ To book your complimentary appointment, simply contact [info@toothwear.co.uk](mailto:info@toothwear.co.uk), 020 7486 7180. For terms and conditions, please visit [toothwear.co.uk](http://toothwear.co.uk)