

Be Kind to Your Mind and Teeth in this time of Covid

The COVID-19 pandemic may be stressful for a lot of us. Fear and anxiety about this new disease can be overwhelming. Stress is the body's reaction to external forces or events that cause physical, emotional or mental tension. – the current pandemic is a perfect example of this.

Stress and control are risk factors for gum disease and cardiovascular disease, the stress hormone cortisol plays a role in increased gum disease and also acts to suppress the immune system. Excessive stress can also lead to a person neglecting their oral hygiene. So, looking after your oral health with good oral hygiene is more important than ever. An added benefit to this is that taking care of your oral health can also support feelings of wellbeing. See our tips for good oral hygiene <https://www.dentalhealth.ie/your-oral-health/the-healthy-mouth/effective-toothbrushing/>

Emotional stress is also a possible trigger for canker sores/mouth ulcers. However, if your mouth ulcers don't clear up within a few days, or if you get them frequently enough to cause concern, visit your Dentist, GP or Pharmacist. Successful prevention of mouth ulcers requires identification and treatment of their underlying cause or causes. It's important to seek the advice of a dentist who may refer more severe cases to a specialist in oral medicine for a thorough investigation.

Stress can also cause a person to clench or grind their teeth. This results in the progressive loss of tooth enamel. You may only be aware of this damage to your teeth on visiting the dentist. Your dentist may recommend the wearing of a bite guard during sleep.

Coping with stress in a healthy way such as regular exercise and stress management techniques may help to relieve it and to cope with anxieties, see some tips here <https://www.mentalhealthireland.ie/get-support/covid19/#five-ways-tough-times-tab>

Be aware of the factors that affect your oral health and know where to go to get the best help and advice:

www.dentalhealth.ie

www.dentist.ie

We're All in this Together.