National Smile Month 2011 – the ‘Smile Factor’

Press Pack

As the UK’s leading independent oral health charity, the British Dental Health Foundation is dedicated to improving the public’s oral health. Each year we run our hugely successful campaign – National Smile Month – to promote looking after teeth and maintaining them for life. This year we have chosen the ‘Smile Factor’ as our campaign theme. We hope you will support us and help continue to promote the importance of healthy teeth to improve the quality of peoples’ lives.

The Foundation’s three key messages will help look after your oral health:

- Brush teeth twice daily with fluoride toothpaste
- Visit the dentist regularly, as often as they recommend
- Cut down on how often you have sugary snacks or drinks

The Foundation’s National Dental Helpline is available on 0845 063 1188.

For campaign information visit www.smilemonth.org, or contact the Foundation at pr@dentalhealth.org or on 01788 539 792.

Platinum Sponsors

Oral-B

Wrigley

Listerine

Silver Sponsor

Macleans
The UK’s biggest annual oral health event!

Taking place between **May 15 and June 15** the campaign has been a key factor in the British Dental Health Foundation’s success in taking simple, practical oral health advice to millions of people nationwide.

With National Smile Month now entering its 35th year, we’re as eager as ever to get more and more people involved. The most important thing is that you take the opportunity to think about how you can improve yours and your family’s oral health.

You could also get involved by looking for events in your area by contacting us and then letting your local newspapers know about the campaign National Smile Month.

The smile is commonly the first thing someone notices about a person, while bacteria in the mouth can cause bad breath, so poor oral hygiene can create a bad impression in our day to day lives and is a big turn off romantically.

**Diet and fitness**: studies show people leading healthy, active lifestyles are 40 per cent less likely to experience gum disease.

**Brushing twice a day**: Before breakfast and before bed, for two minutes a time with a fluoride toothpaste, is an essential start to the routine. Flossing or brushing between the teeth is another essential, yet less well practiced, technique.

**Cut out tobacco**: Smoking or chewing tobacco products such as paan can make gum disease much worse. People who smoke are more likely to produce bacterial plaque that leads to gum disease. The gums are affected because smoking means you have less oxygen in your bloodstream, so the infected gums do not heal. Smoking can also lead to tooth staining, more teeth lost because of gum disease, bad breath, and in more severe cases mouth cancer.

**Take up our ‘Two minute, twice a day’ challenge**

The UK’s top dental charity is urging people to follow the ‘two minute rule’ for brushing, to help prevent a range of oral and general health conditions.

Good brushing doesn’t only keep our smiles looking their best – it can also help in the fight against serious conditions like diabetes, heart disease and strokes.

A good brushing routine will not only help fight problems like tooth decay, bad breath and stained teeth it will also reduce the chances of developing gum disease – which has been linked to heart disease, heart attacks, strokes, diabetes and low birth weight babies.

Clinical research has found that, on average, people only brush for about 45 seconds and this is barely enough to skim across all of the teeth.

People should brush for two minutes twice a day with a full fluoride toothpaste. Daily flossing, cutting down how often you have sugary foods and drinks and visiting the dentist regularly, as often as they recommend, will help considerably too.”
Facts and Figures

The British Dental Health Foundation has been campaigning for nearly forty years to improve the nation’s oral health. Together, with the dental profession, the public and the support of our many partners and sponsors we have managed to help bring about major improvements to oral health.

Here are just some of the reasons why we should all continue to campaign together during National Smile Month to make a difference to the nation’s health.

- Over three fifths of adults in England and Northern Ireland (61 per cent and 60 per cent respectively) and over two thirds in Wales (1) and Scotland (2) (both 69 per cent) now attend their dentists regularly. In 1978, the figure was just 44 per cent in England and 39 per cent in Wales. (1)
- The proportion of the population with no natural teeth in England, Northern Ireland and Wales has fallen to just six per cent in 2009. In 1978, the figure was as high as 37 per cent in Wales. (1)
- The number of adults with 21 or more natural teeth has risen to 86 per cent in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In 1978, the percentage was as low as 68 per cent in Northern Ireland. (1)
- In 2009, two thirds (66.6 per cent) of children aged 12 were found to be free of visible dental decay. In 1973, this figure was less than 10 per cent. (3)
- The dental health of five year old children is even better - just 31 per cent of children show any obvious dental decay. (4)
- The majority of adults (71 per cent) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are now free of visible dental decay on the surfaces of their crowns. In Northern Ireland this figure has nearly halved from 52 per cent to 28 per cent since 1998. (2)
- The UK is one of the most likely nations in Europe to visit their dentist for a check-up – helping to prevent the battle against poor oral health. The UK was ranked second (72 per cent), after the Netherlands (79%), in a recent survey. (5)

... But there's still more to do

Of course, there is still much to do to improve the nation’s oral health. Here’s just some of the reasons why we should continue to campaign together to give us all an even bigger ‘Smile Factor’.

- Nearly one in ten people in the UK aren’t registered with a dentist. (6)
- One person in 10 is unaware of the threat of mouth cancer. (7)
- Poor dental health has been linked to an increased risk of type 2 diabetes. (8)
- Direct links have been established between bacteria in the mouth and heart attacks. (9)
- One third of people in Britain still only brush their teeth once a day, or less. (6)
- New research suggests an increased risk of breast cancer caused by tooth loss and gum disease. (10)
References:

(2) - The Scottish Health Survey: Volume 1: Main Report.
(5) - Oral Health - Special Eurobarometer 330, February 2010.
(6) - National Dental Survey
(7) - British Dental Health Foundation Survey, 2010
(9) - Andriankaja, O., et al, University at Buffalo, 2009
(10) - The Karolinska Institute in Sweden, 2011
Great Fundraising Ideas, ways to get involved

**Fun days:** Create campaign interest by having fun........ How about a themed day at school where children can dress up and play games as they learn? Organise some unusual competitions at your college or an awareness raising challenge in your workplace.

**Displays:** National Smile Month posters are a bright, eye-catching and informative way of brightening your dental practice, and would also be an effective means of promoting the campaign in hospitals, schools, colleges and community centres.

**Fundraising:** Collecting donations and organising sponsorship is a fantastic way of ensuring the Foundation keeps running. Please download a pack from the media centre, or contact the Foundation's Public Relations Department for further details.

**Brushathon and the two-minute challenge:** Don’t forget your toothbrush! A sponsored Brushathon and other teeth-brushing challenges are a fun way to follow a healthy dental routine. National Smile Month encourages everyone to brush their teeth for the recommended two minutes, twice a day.

**Dental visits and open sessions:** As an excellent way to publicise your dental practice, why not run a competition in your practice newsletter or local newspaper and offer a free consultation as a prize? You can also make people aware of the cosmetic dentistry options available to help people rediscover their smile factor. Dental experts, oral health educators and advisors can offer talks to a variety of audiences to ensure a positive oral health message is heard and understood.

**Healthy food initiatives:** If you run a workplace canteen or local restaurant, why not offer a healthy alternative to high salt, fat and sugar foods? It’s an ideal opportunity to promote the importance of a healthy diet and cutting down on sugary snacks and drinks. Food-tasting sessions can help customers learn about better overall health.

**Practical Support:** To support your activities there is an extensive range of National Smile Month products to help you communicate, motivate and educate. You can choose from nearly 40 branded products, including event and campaign packs, to make promoting your activities as easy as possible. Please visit the shop section of this site to find out more about.

**Why don’t you try and...**

**Use Local Media:** Local newspapers, newsletters and regional online news sites are always keen on covering events for a good cause, so make them aware of the details of your event in good time. Promoting your event in your local community is also a great way to encourage people to come along and get involved.

**Write a News Release:** Why not send out a news release too? It’s an excellent means of promoting a good oral healthcare message, especially if you join forces with other dental and healthcare professionals in your community.

To make things easier, you can download a National Smile Month news release template from [http://www.nationalsmilemonth.org/professional/pressReleaseTemplate](http://www.nationalsmilemonth.org/professional/pressReleaseTemplate).
**Smile for the camera:** News desks always love a good photograph to accompany a news release or story, whether it’s online or in a newspaper. Try emailing a relevant photograph to news desks one or two weeks before the event, as well as taking a few shots on the day.

Booking a photographer may make life easier for you, but you can also achieve fun, entertaining photographs using your own camera skills.

**Advertise your event:** Promoting your event as early as possible is really important. We recommend you start promoting at least four to six weeks before the event. Simple leaflets, e-mails and text messages are just some of the cheap and effective ways of promoting the event.

**Share your success:** Let’s make the most of your 2011 activities – just let the Foundation know about your ideas, events and success. We may also be able to promote your events to our own media contacts, and share your success as good practice throughout the UK.

Simply email your news, information and photos to our press office at pr@dentalhealth.org.

**Register your event**

Why not register your National Smile Month event into the annual Dental Awards 2012 “Best National Smile Month Event” category? There’s lots of time to apply. Just register your interest with us and after National Smile Month and we’ll send you all the information you need.

Furthermore, entrants will also go forward to the British Dental Health Foundation’s “Event of the summer” competition, where the chosen winners will have the chance to tell us all about their event and gain a little added exposure as part of a feature article.

All you have to do is email us:

- Your name
- Your Practice or organisation
- What you plan to do
- When you plan to do it

It’s that simple! Send emails to pr@dentalhealth.org. And good luck!
Foundation Statement

Dr Nigel Carter – Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation

“35 years ago the first ever National Smile Month took place. Today, our enthusiasm and passion to inform and educate the public on the importance of good oral health is as strong as ever. The campaign is the largest annual oral health event in the UK and year-on-year provides thousands of people with the ideal opportunity to look at how they can improve their oral health.

“So, as our campaign reaches a rather special milestone we intend to go all out to make National Smile Month 2011 the best yet. This year’s theme, the ‘Smile Factor’, is all about the power of a smile, the ability it has to influence the success of our relationships and careers and the impact it has upon our lives.

“Almost three times as many people say they judge someone they first meet by their smile, rather than their dress sense and over two-thirds of the people agreed that having a good smile not only helps build people's confidence psychologically and socially - but it also helps their love life, too.

“This all adds to the established perception that the smile is one of our most important physical attribute – and with just under half of us believing that having pearly white teeth is the most important aspect of a good smile, while more than a quarter rate straight, even teeth as an absolute must, we must continue to value the significance it holds.

“The first step to a confident smile is to make sure there's no problem with your basic oral health. Tooth decay and gum disease can look unsightly and cause bad breath, as well as potentially leading to more serious health problems.

“Almost everyone suffers from gum disease at some point in their lives but with a good oral healthcare routine they can easily prevent it from developing into something more serious – so brush twice-a-day with fluoride toothpaste, cut down how often you have sugary foods and drinks and visit the dentist regularly, as often as they recommend.

“There is a growing body of evidence suggesting that people with gum disease are more at risk of heart disease, heart attacks, strokes, diabetes and, in the case of pregnant women, giving birth to underweight babies. However, gum disease is caused by poor oral healthcare and is, therefore, totally preventable.

“This summer, with our ‘Smile Factor’ campaign, the British Dental Health Foundation wants to put the smile back on peoples’ faces and help them display their full personalities.

“The Foundation is very excited to be working on the campaign and we look forward to working alongside partners and thousands of event organisers. We’ve come a long way in 35 years, both in terms of our campaign, as well as in the levels our oral health as a nation – let’s just hope that in further 35 years we will make the same advances.”
News Release

National Smile Month to bring out the ‘Smile Factor’

The UK’s leading independent oral health charity, the British Dental Health Foundation, is delighted to announce the theme for this year’s National Smile Month, the ‘Smile Factor’, running from 15 May – 15 June.

The aim of the campaign is to put the smile back on peoples’ faces and help them display their full personalities through the ‘Smile Factor’ theme. Now into its 35th year, National Smile Month remains an integral part of the Foundation’s work in promoting greater oral health. As in previous years, the Foundation will also be raising the awareness of a healthy diet and the link between good oral health and good overall body health and promoting the three key messages of brush for two minutes twice a day using a fluoride toothpaste, visit your dentist regularly, as often as they recommend and cut down on how often you have sugary foods and drinks.

Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation, Dr Nigel Carter, described the thinking behind this year’s campaign.

Dr Carter said: “A smile can be a very powerful show of emotion, yet not everyone has the confidence to do so. They say you can hide behind a smile if you are not happy or are self-conscious about your teeth, so many people are missing out on showing their very own ‘Smile Factor’. Others are being held back by poor oral well-being and its impact on their general health. This year’s campaign is designed to challenge those perceptions and get you smiling again.”

Every year the Foundation encourages local communities, practices and individuals up and down the country to take part and get involved in National Smile Month, and as ever, there will be a wide range of different ways in which people can do just that. There will be many family and community events throughout the campaign – all of which need your support.

If you’d like to find out more about National Smile Month, wish to take part in an event or organise one, all campaign material is now available. Please call the Foundation’s PR Department on 01788 539792 to request a copy.

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News Release

Smiles Top Attractiveness Poll

A ‘smile’ has topped a poll of the most important physical features when it comes to attraction between men and women.

A smile was rated highly by 56 per cent of respondents, closely followed by faces (53 per cent) and eyes (51 per cent). Dress sense, body shape, hair and height were also measured, with the latter bringing up the rear on 25 per cent. Interestingly, it was a non-physical attribute – personality – which was the clear winner of the survey. Ninety per cent of respondents rated this human attribute most important when it comes to attraction.

The results have been published as part of the British Dental Health Foundation’s annual campaign – National Smile Month – now in its 35th year. This year the theme is ‘The Smile Factor’, which aims to remind people that their mouth, teeth and smile is fundamental to all aspects of their life – whether career, personality, relationships, attraction or all-round good health.

Despite the importance of smiles and teeth to everyday life, many people appear to have a poor image of the nation’s ‘Smile Factor’. The survey reveals that only 23 per cent believed that the nation had ‘good teeth’, and approaching half the population were not happy with their smile or teeth - stained or yellow teeth being the most common concern (37 per cent).

Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation, Dr Nigel Carter, said: “As a nation we probably spend more time and money looking after our hair and the clothes we wear, rather than caring for our teeth. The survey is a great reminder that we should be giving greater attention to our teeth – not just because it improves oral health – but because it gives us the confidence to smile, which makes a major difference to our relationships, careers and overall image.

“During National Smile Month, we hope everyone will consider what they can do to improve their Smile Factor. Hundreds of dental practices across the UK will be supporting the campaign and it’s an excellent time to seek their help and advice.

“It’s really important to get the basics right at home as well. We recommend brushing your teeth for two minutes twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste, cutting down on how often you have sugary foods and drinks, and visiting your dentist regularly, as often as they recommend. Adopting this good oral health regime can make a huge difference to a confident smile and many aspects of everyday life”, advised Dr Carter.

For more information about how you can care for your teeth please contact our Dental Helpline on 0845 063 1188.

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Editor’s notes:

1. Research Findings: Attractiveness

Thinking about your ideal partner, please rate the following attributes, where 1 is not at all important and 10 is very important.

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<td>Eyes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Face</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>10%</td>
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High Scores % *

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
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<tr>
<td>Teeth/Smile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hair</td>
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<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personality</td>
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<td>90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eyes</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>51%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Face</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>53%</td>
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Sample size: 1,004. Date: 17 March 2011
News Release

Happy the Hippo to help young children look after their teeth

‘Happy the Hippo’ has been recruited by the British Dental Health Foundation to help teach young children how to look after their teeth. Around one third of children under the age of 12 in the UK continue to suffer from dental decay. Happy will be joining the Foundation in May to help lead the 35th National Smile Month campaign.

Despite major improvements in children’s oral health over the past 40 years, many children are still being affected by dental decay. The most recent data suggests that around a third (31 per cent) of five year olds starting primary school will have dental decay. The picture is slightly worse for children aged 12 in secondary schools – one third of children in every classroom will have signs of visible dental decay.

The theme of this year’s National Smile Month campaign is the ‘Smile Factor’. In adulthood peoples’ mouth, teeth and smiles are fundamental to all aspects of their life – whether career, personality, relationships, attraction or all-round good health. Creating good oral health habits from an early age are especially important to help children keep their smile factors throughout their lives.

Happy the Hippo said: “I am really pleased to be helping the Foundation. Children can visit our website at www.smilemonth.org to find out about how to look after their teeth and also download my face mask. We also have a free Dental Helpline at the Foundation, which can help Mums, Dads, guardians, teachers, friends and lots of other people about all aspects of looking after children’s teeth.”

Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation, Dr Nigel Carter, says: “Over the past 40 years we have made great improvements in children’s oral health. In 1973, nine out of every ten children aged twelve showed signs of visible dental decay. However, the incidence of dental decay still remains too high and we hope that Happy the Hippo will show more children how to look after their teeth better.

“National Smile Month between 15 May and 15 June is a great opportunity for parents, guardians, schools and teachers to get involved. We have lots of excellent free resources on our website to help educate and improve children’s oral health. Our free Dental Helpline on 0845 063 1188 is also available to anyone who needs help and advice.”

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Editor’s notes:

1. In 2009, one third (33.3 per cent) of children aged 12 were found to have visible dental decay. In 1973, this figure was more than 90 per cent. Source: NHS Dental Epidemiology Programme for England - Oral Health Survey of 12 year old Children 2008 / 2009.

News Release

And the celebrity with the most welcoming smile is...?

TV presenter Holly Willoughby has the ‘smile factor’ according to the general public, having been named the British celebrity with the most welcoming smile.

The survey, carried out as part of the British Dental Health Foundation’s annual campaign, National Smile Month, showed Holly received a quarter of the votes, with fellow TV personality Kelly Brook scooping 18 per cent. For the boys, David Beckham and Prince William finished with 11 per cent, while William’s brother Prince Harry came last, only receiving three per cent of the votes.

For Spice Girl Victoria Beckham, the statistics make for familiar reading. In 2007, Victoria was named as having the worst smile. Four years later, as well as being named as the celebrity with the least welcoming smile, the survey also suggests 63 per cent of people think Victoria should smile more, while a further 25 per cent of people think Posh Spice has the fakest smile.

The results also show the fickle nature of the celebrity world. In 2007, Kylie Minogue, Patsy Kensit and Kate Moss all appeared in the top five of well-known public figures with the best smiles, alongside David Beckham and Prince William. In 2011, all three women fell out of the rankings.

The campaign is taking place from 15 May to 15 June, and this year the theme is ‘The Smile Factor’, which aims to remind people that their mouth, teeth and smile is fundamental to all aspects of their life – whether career, personality, relationships, attraction or all-round good health. Now into its 35th year, National Smile Month remains an integral part of the Foundation’s work in promoting greater oral health. Celebrities are often seen as role models in society, and the visible standard of their oral hygiene is no exception. As a result, the British public are becoming more open to the idea of cosmetic dentistry because of its prevalence in the media.

Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation, Dr Nigel Carter, agrees with this assessment.

Dr Carter said: “It is no coincidence that we associate a confident, radiant smile with images of people and celebrities we see every day who we consider to have that special ‘Smile Factor’. The growing trend towards cosmetic dentistry may be a result of the way celebrities present themselves, but we must not forget the basics of good oral hygiene.

“Brushing for two minutes twice a day using a fluoride toothpaste, cutting down on how often you eat and drink sugary foods and drinks and visiting your dentist regularly, as often as they recommend, will help develop good oral health. Other habits such as chewing sugar-free gum after meals and using interdental brushes can also improve your oral health.”

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Editor’s Notes

- The British Dental Health Foundation is the UK’s leading oral health charity, with a 40–year track record of providing public information and influencing government policy. It maintains a free consumer advice service, an impartial and objective product accreditation scheme,
publishes and distributes a wide range of literature for the profession and consumers, and runs National Smile Month each May, to promote greater awareness of the benefits of better oral health.

- Please visit the Foundation’s Twitter accounts: smilemonth, dentalhealthorg, mouthcancerorg and add our Facebook fan–page: ‘British Dental Health Foundation’. For information and free expert advice on oral health issues call the National Dental Helpline on 0845 063 1188, or alternatively visit [www.dentalhealth.org](http://www.dentalhealth.org).

### Which celebrity do you think should smile more?

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<th>Simon Cowell</th>
<th>Robert Pattinson</th>
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### Which celebrity has the most welcoming smile?

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<th>Lisa Snowdon</th>
<th>Christine Bleakley</th>
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### Which celebrity has the fakest smile?

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News Release

Dentists More Scary Than Snakes and Spiders

It’s not good news for Dentists as the latest piece of research by the British Dental Health Foundation suggests that visiting the dentist makes people more nervous than snakes or spiders (1). The research echoes last month’s Adult Dental Health Survey (1) which revealed half of adults – especially women - were classified as having moderate to extreme dental anxiety.

The Foundation asked 1,004 people – in the lead up to National Smile Month 2011 - what made them most nervous from a list including heights, flying, injections, doctors, snakes, spiders, going to hospital and visiting the dentist. Over one in five people rated visiting their dentist as the thing that made them most nervous – more than any other category. Overall, statistically, heights topped the poll of biggest fears, closely followed by visiting the dentist and going to the hospital. Snakes were rated fourth and spiders came fifth.

In comparison to Doctors, Dentists also struggled. The Foundation discovered that nearly 10 times as many people (22 per cent) were made most nervous by their dentists, compared to their doctor (two per cent). The Adult Dental Health Survey points to two dental treatments in particular as the main cause of these nerves: three out of ten (30 per cent) adults said that having a tooth drilled would make them very or extremely anxious. A similar number (28 per cent) of people reported equivalent levels of anxiety about having a local anaesthetic injection.

Dr Nigel Carter, Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation, said: “Everyone in the profession knows that dental anxiety is a major barrier for many people to visit their dentist. What may prove concerning is just how poorly the profession rates in comparison to doctors. The comparison with snakes and spiders may appear frivolous, but it does suggest we still have a lot of work to do to build public confidence.

“The issue of anxiety affects everyone in the profession. Collectively we need to work together and we hope that the whole profession will get behind this year’s National Smile Month campaign which starts on the 15 May 2011. The campaign offers the best opportunity for everyone to reach millions of people whose nerves and anxiety are directly affecting their oral health.”

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Editor’s notes:

1. National Smile Month Survey 2011: Nervousness

Question: Which of the Following Makes You Most nervous?

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Source: British Dental Health Foundation. Sample Size: 1,004.

3. Adult Dental Health Survey 2009, the Health and Social Care Information Centre. Published March 2011.
News Release

Houses of Parliament to stage Smile Factor launch

Oral health campaigners the British Dental Health Foundation are delighted to announce the launch for National Smile Month will once again take place at the Houses of Parliament.

The annual event, held at Westminster tomorrow (May 12), will signal the start of the UK’s largest oral health campaign, this year celebrating its 35th anniversary.

Many leading figures from the world of dentistry are set to be in attendance for the National Smile Month launch which will occur between May 15 and June 15 and go under the theme of the Smile Factor.

Hosted by Parliamentary sponsor the Rt. Hon. Sir Paul Beresford MP, the gathering will include speeches from some of dentistry’s leading experts including the Foundation’s Chief Executive Dr Nigel Carter and its President Daniel Davis.

Dr Carter looks forward to the launch and hopes it will kick start the beginning of a campaign that will put a smile back of people’s faces.

He said: “Many might underestimate it but a smile can be very influential feature. It can shape our lives, our relationships and careers and be a very powerful show of emotion, yet not everyone has the confidence to do so. Those who are not happy or are self-conscious about their teeth, could be missing out on showing off their very own ‘Smile Factor’. Others are being held back by poor oral well-being and its impact on their general health. This year’s campaign is designed to challenge those perceptions and get you smiling again.

"Getting people to talk about their teeth and dental habits is vital in our goal of improving the state of oral health not only in the UK but worldwide. We have had a tremendous response to the campaign, particularly in the last couple of years, but we must work harder to ensure this year’s National Smile Month can build on that success.

"The launch tomorrow will be a superb way to kick-start the month. It is an utterly marvellous setting of which to stage such an event and I hope to see many of the well-known figures in dentistry there, from members from the trade press to those involved directly in the profession – all of which have helped make the Smile Factor possible.”

Sponsored by four giants of oral health care, Platinum Sponsors Oral-B, Wrigley and Listerine, along with first time Silver Sponsor Macleans, the campaign will yet again provide an exciting opportunity for everyone to get involved in promoting good oral health.

During the course of the month, the Foundation will be looking to promote their three key oral health messages.

Dr Carter added: "As far as day-to-day oral health goes, our three key messages of brushing your teeth for two minutes twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste, cutting down on how often you have
sugary foods and drinks and visiting your dentist as often as they recommend, provide a firm base for a lifetime of good oral health.

"Remember, having the Smile Factor can improve your confidence, your attractiveness and your general health - so don't underrate it!"

---ENDS---
News Release

Bizarre uses for a toothbrush...revealed!

A NATIONWIDE survey looking into the UK’s oral health habits has revealed that we turn to a toothbrush for far more than an aid to keep our smiles pearly and white.

The research, commissioned by the British Dental Health Foundation as part of the 35th anniversary of National Smile Month (May 15 – June 15), questioned more than 1,000 people in order to try and provide an insight into some of the UK’s oral health habits and routines.

The national survey uncovered that more than four in every five of us go on to reuse our old toothbrushes for another purpose.

Results showed that four in ten people use an old toothbrush for scrubbing bathroom tiles, making it by far the most popular activity. Almost a third (28 percent) of us use our past toothbrushes to assist in cleaning various kitchen appliances, more than a quarter (26 per cent) use them to give an extra glimmer to our jewellery and roughly one in every five (18 per cent) of adults use the versatile oral hygiene product to shine shoes.

More uses included cleaning bikes, computer keyboards, toilets and toilets seats, fish tanks and finger nails. A clean sweep all-round!

Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation, Dr Nigel Carter, says a toothbrush is able to perform many functions around the home after it’s time cleaning teeth and gums are over.

Dr Carter said: “We all should get through around four toothbrushes every year if we are to keep our oral health in tip-top condition. Generally people don’t change their toothbrushes often enough, but there are still plenty lying around the house and our survey has shown that people realise that a toothbrush has a value and role to play beyond their normal life and use.”

Results from the comprehensive survey found that the age of the owner plays a significant part in what happens to a toothbrush after it is too old to care for the teeth and gums.

Those of us over 75 are three times more likely to re-use their toothbrush for a different purpose than those between the ages of 16 and 34 and twice more likely than those between 35 and 44.

Additionally, women are a third more likely to reuse their toothbrush for chores and other uses than their male counterparts.

Combing eyebrows, dusting archaeological artefacts, children’s painting and other various art projects also featured in what we do with an old toothbrush, while more cleaning alternatives included taps and plugholes, tools, silverware, car batteries and wheels, football boots and bird cages.

Bizarrely, other uses for the oral hygiene product ranged from women who admit to using it to apply their hair dye to those who use the object as a hair chopstick while some men who choose to use an old toothbrush to clean the dog’s teeth or give the golf clubs a sharp polish.
Now into its 35th year, National Smile Month remains an integral part of the Foundation’s work in promoting greater oral health.

As in previous years, the Foundation will also be raising the awareness of a healthy diet and the link between good oral health and good overall body health and promoting the three key messages of brush for two minutes twice a day using a fluoride toothpaste, visit your dentist regularly, as often as they recommend and cut down on how often you have sugary foods and drinks.

The Foundation has chosen the ‘Smile Factor’ to be the theme for the 2011 campaign, aiming to put the smile back on peoples' faces and help them display their full personalities through the power and influence of their smile.

---ENDS---
News Release

Tooth Fairy Business Tops £16 million

UK children are collecting over £16 million each year thanks to the generosity of the Tooth Fairy.

A new survey by the British Dental Health Foundation has calculated that the Tooth Fairy is leaving over £16.5 million each year under the pillows of children in exchange for their milk teeth. The survey has also found that £1 is the most common amount left by the Tooth Fairy, with over six out of every ten children finding the shiny coin when they wake up.

In fact the Tooth Fairy is one of the hardest working employees in the country as they clock on for their night time shift. With an estimated 15 million teeth falling out of children’s mouth each year, the Tooth Fairy is making an average of 42,000 visits each night and over 1.3 million money drops during this year’s National Smile Month campaign, which is organised by the Foundation and runs until 15 June 2011.

Nearly 65 per cent of children received £1 for each of their milk teeth. Just over one in ten children were lucky enough to receive over £2 or more each time for their missing tooth. The average mount left by the Tooth Fairy was £1.08 with children in Yorkshire and Humberside receiving the most (£1.45) and those in the West Midlands the least (£0.86).

Dr Nigel Carter, Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation said: “Children have around 20 milk teeth so it is no surprise that the Tooth Fairy is so busy. Unfortunately, around one in three children are leaving teeth for the Tooth Fairy which show signs of visible dental decay, so we hope that during National Smile Month Mums, Dads, Grandparents, Guardians and Teachers will take the opportunity to remind children about how to look after their teeth.

“A simple routine of brushing for two minutes twice a day using a fluoride toothpaste (3), cutting down on how often you eat and drink sugary foods and drinks and visiting your dentist regularly, as often as they recommend, will help develop good oral health”, advised Dr Carter.

---Ends---

Editor’s notes:

1. Children normally have about 20 teeth by the age of two and a half years. Milk teeth begin to fall out from about the age of six. By the age of thirteen, 28 adult teeth should be in the mouth. Between the age of 18 and 25 four more teeth may begin to appear at the top and bottom.

2. Amount left by the Tooth Fairy

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Source: British Dental Health Foundation: 17 March 2011

3. All children up to three years old should use a pea sized amount of toothpaste with a fluoride level of at least 1000 parts per million (ppm). After three years they should use a toothpaste that contains 1350-1500 ppm. You can check the level of fluoride on the packaging of the toothpaste.
News Release

**Doctor Who’s Assistant – Brushing Gives Her The ‘Smile Factor’**

TV character Amy Pond - the well-known side kick of Doctor Who – has revealed her secret for a natural smile and teeth. And it’s easier and simpler than many people think. Her secret? It’s nothing more complicated than simply brushing with a good electric toothbrush.

Like many people on TV, Amy, played by Scottish actress Karen Gillan, is very conscious about how she looks, especially her teeth. In the latest episode of Dr Who Confidential (Saturday 28 May 2011, BBC Three), Karen and her colleagues revealed that she suffered from yellow teeth – which she described as ‘Yellowstone Park’.

However, when asked if Karen had had her teeth whitened she revealed that a new electric toothbrush, given to her for Christmas, was the reason for her rediscovering her ‘Smile Factor’ – the theme of this year’s National Smile Month which runs until the 15 June.

Dr Nigel Carter, Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation, said: “Many people now choose to have their teeth whitened to improve their smiles. But it is not the only way to keep your ‘Smile Factor’.

“As Karen reveals, there is no substitute for getting the basics right to ensure good oral health. During National Smile Month, we try to remind everyone of three simple rules: brushing for two minutes twice a day using a fluoride toothpaste, cutting down on how often you eat and drink sugary foods and drinks and visiting your dentist regularly, as often as they recommend, will help keep a clean healthy smile. It is also worth remembering that staining is due to everyday substances like tea, coffee and smoking. If you can cut down on these you should be able to keep your teeth whiter for longer.

“Tests have proved that electric toothbrushes are more effective at removing plaque [1] – in some cases up to 20 per cent. Those with heads that rotate in both directions – oscillating heads – and pulsate are the most effective. The British Dental Health Foundation’s accreditation scheme offers consumers independent advice on over 150 current dental products, including market leading electric toothbrushes such as the Oral-B Triumph range”, informed Dr Carter.

For more information about the Foundation’s accreditation scheme for dental products, including toothbrushes, visit: [http://www.dentalhealth.org/approved-products](http://www.dentalhealth.org/approved-products).

---Ends---

Editor’s notes:

1. Manual versus powered toothbrushing for oral health

When compared to manual toothbrushes, powered toothbrushes with a rotation oscillation action provide protection against gum inflammation in the long and short term and better plaque removal in the short term. Removing dental plaque by toothbrushing helps prevent gum inflammation (gingivitis). Toothbrushing with a fluoride toothpaste prevents tooth decay.
Powered toothbrushes simulate manual toothbrushing in different ways (such as moving side to side or circular motions). The review of trials found that only rotation oscillation (where brush heads rotate in one direction and then the other) is better than manual toothbrushes at removing plaque and reducing gum inflammation, and is no more likely to cause injuries to gums. Long-term benefits of this for dental health are unclear.

News Release

Dental Charity Supports New Push to Protect Toddlers from Dental Decay

The UK’s leading dental health charity has given its full backing to the Infant and Toddler Forum to help achieve a major improvement in the dental health of children under the age of five.

Around one third of children under the age of five in the UK continue to suffer from dental decay (3). The British Dental Health Foundation is now working closely with the Infant and Toddler Forum to help raise awareness of the issue with health care professionals, parents, carers and guardians.

With diet being an important factor for healthy teeth, the Foundation has already endorsed the Forum’s ‘Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers’, which covers advice in areas such as eating, drinking and exercise. Both organisations have now combined, during National Smile Month, to produce a new Factsheet called ‘Protecting Toddlers from Tooth Decay’, (4) which provides comprehensive advice on how to care for children’s teeth – including fluoride, medicines, diet, snacking, tooth brushing and bottle-feeding.

Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation, Dr Nigel Carter, said: “It is really important children develop a good oral health routine from a very early age. It’s also important that the people who care for them have the knowledge and information to help nurture children. Our relationship with the Infant and Toddler Forum creates an excellent opportunity for us to share our experience and advice directly with the people and organisations that have the most influence on children in their formative years.”

Judy More, paediatric dietician and Forum member explains: “Parents often think that tooth decay in children’s first teeth is not important as they will grow their adult set in any case. However, the first teeth are just as important as adult teeth as early loss of the first teeth can lead to overcrowding when adult teeth appear. The Infant & Toddler Forum has produced some simple guidance and tips for parents to help avoid tooth decay in their little ones.”

---ENDS---

Editor’s notes

1. The Infant and Toddler Forum brings together a multidisciplinary team of experts dedicated to improving the access of healthcare professionals to practical evidence-based information on the nutrition and feeding of children under three and thereby equip them to advise and support the parents and carers of young children. W: www.infantandtoddlerforum.org


To download a free copy of the Factsheet visit: www.infantandtoddlerforum.org/article_45+Protecting+Toddlers+from+Tooth+Decay_id-550.html
News Release

Nearly Half Admit Skipping Brushing Teeth at Bedtime

Nearly half of the population (47 per cent) has admitted to regularly skipping brushing their teeth at bedtime putting their oral health at risk.

Women are the most likely to break one of the three golden rules for clean and healthy teeth, with nearly six out of ten (59 per cent) regularly skipping brushing their teeth at bedtime, compared to just over a third of men (35 per cent). In contrast, relatively few people skip brushing their teeth in the morning with just one in ten people starting the day without looking after their teeth.

The findings (1) have been revealed by the British Dental Health Foundation as part of its National Smile Month campaign, which has been running since 1977. The survey – which looked at the nation’s brushing habits – also found that over a quarter of the population (28 per cent) have admitted to not brushing their teeth for 24 hours and around one in seven people (15 per cent) have not cleaned their teeth for more than two days.

During National Smile Month, the Foundation seeks to remind everyone of the three golden rules for good oral health: brushing for two minutes twice a day using a fluoride toothpaste; cutting down on how often you eat and drink sugary foods and drinks; and visiting your dentist regularly, as often as they recommend.

Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation, Dr Nigel Carter, said: “Anyone who regularly skips brushing their teeth – morning or night-time – is storing up oral health problems for the future such as tooth decay and gum disease – the biggest cause of tooth loss often resulting in the need for bridges, dentures or implants. Gum disease has also been linked to other medical problems such as heart disease, strokes, diabetes and respiratory disease.

“Good oral health cannot be maintained by brushing once a day as each brushing session has a specific purpose. Brushing first thing in the morning coats the tooth’s enamel with fluoride to strengthen and protect the tooth surface against acid attacks throughout the day.

“Brushing last thing at night removes the deposits which have built up from eating and drinking during the day, as well as removing plaque – the cause of gum disease. The last brush of the day also coats the teeth with fluoride, which is not washed away through eating and drinking, and continues to protect the tooth’s surface further during sleep,” advised Dr Carter.

---ENDS---

News Release issued on behalf of the British Dental Health Foundation by David Westgarth, PR and Press Officer. Telephone: 01788 539792. Email: pr@dentalhealth.org

Editor’s notes

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News Release

Old toothbrushes are a severe health risk, warns dental expert

We all should change our toothbrushes every three months or risk potentially serious oral health problems – that’s the message from British Dental Health Foundation’s Dr Nigel Carter.

The Chief Executive of the UK’s largest oral health charity has urged more people to start investing in new toothbrushes more regularly, before it develops into a “breeding ground” for germs and bacteria.

Numerous studies over the years have reported the toothbrush to be the cause of repeated infection in the mouth. Not only able to grow and reproduce on the bristles of the brush, the bacterium also has the ability to transmit organisms responsible for diseases throughout the body, such as herpes.

Yet past surveys conducted by Foundation show that almost two thirds of the population fail to change their toothbrush after the recommended three months.

“They may seem like a rather insignificant tool but they form a crucial part of our daily routine and although most toothbrushes are used twice a day for months on end, they are rarely cleaned thoroughly and are often kept in warm, moist conditions, ideal for bacterial growth,” says Dr Carter.

“Despite this, there is little public awareness that the bristles may become contaminated by either the hundreds of microorganisms thriving in the mouth or the many thousands living in the environment.”

In addition to the herpes virus that can form on the bristles of the brush, which can result in cold sores, studies have also shown that bacteria from the head and handles of the toothbrush can also be responsible for many cold and flu viruses, as well as many ear, nose and throat infections.

A contaminated toothbrush is also an important factor with many periodontal infections.

Dr Carter added: “It is so simple but by replacing a toothbrush more often, we can prevent a lot of unnecessary illness and disease.

“Perhaps it is considered an unnecessary expense but changing your toothbrush, or the head of an electric toothbrush, is actually very cheap. To spend £8 a year for four toothbrushes is nothing compared to losing a day off work and spending ‘x’ amount of money on preventable dental work, unnecessary prescriptions or over the counter medicines due to poor oral health.

“There are plenty products on the market which claim to successfully disinfect toothbrushes, although the effectiveness of them is very debatable. My advice would be after three months to buy a new toothbrush and begin to re-use the old brush for alternative household chores. When it is completely worn out then recycle it.

“It is important to invest in a new toothbrush on a regular basis so that the bristles are more efficient and give the mouth the best chance of remaining clean and healthy.”
The Foundation is looking to increase public awareness of how best to maintain or develop good oral health as part of its National Smile Month campaign, running for the 35th year, from May 15 to June 15.

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News Release issued on behalf of the British Dental Health Foundation by David Westgarth, PR and Press Officer. Telephone: 01788 539792. Email: pr@dentalhealth.org.

Editor’s notes

1. The British Dental Health Foundation is the UK’s leading oral health charity, with a 40-year track record of providing public information and influencing government policy. It maintains a free consumer advice service, an impartial and objective product accreditation scheme, publishes and distributes a wide range of literature for the profession and consumers, and runs National Smile Month each May, to promote greater awareness of the benefits of better oral health.

2. Please visit the Foundation’s Twitter accounts: dentalhealthorg, mouthcancerorg and smilemonth and add our Facebook fan-page: ‘British Dental Health Foundation’. For information and free expert advice on oral health issues call the National Dental Helpline on 0845 063 1188, or alternatively visit www.dentalhealth.org.


News Release

Chocolate makes us smile the most

Chocolate has topped the poll for the thing that makes most people smile.

As this year’s National Smile Month comes to an end today, the British Dental Health Foundation has been asking hundreds of people what makes them smile the most. In a close fought competition a simple bar of chocolate has topped the poll, followed by ‘seeing a loved one’.

Food and ‘relationships’ were common inclusions in a bewildering array of things mentioned in the poll, which spontaneously gave people the ‘Smile factor’ – the theme of this year’s National Smile Month campaign run by the British Dental Health Foundation.

Around half of respondents featured chocolate on their list of items, with 60 per cent of women making it their favourite choice. Men preferred a Sunday roast to chocolate, but both scored highly.

The contagious nature of smiling was also highlighted by around a third of people saying they smiled when they ‘saw someone else smile’.

The Foundation also asked people to choose a colour which made them smile the most. The top polling answer was the nice summery colour yellow with around a third of votes.

Dr Nigel Carter, Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation, said: “We hope this year’s National Smile Month campaign has brought a smile to many people’s faces and has helped to remind everyone about how to care for their teeth.

“It is clear the nation has a very sweet tooth and chocolate definitely has the smile factor. Chocolate may not be the best thing for your teeth, but if everyone follows the Foundation’s three rules for good oral health, it’s something that we can all continue to enjoy.

“As a final reminder for this year, we recommend adopting a simple routine of brushing for two minutes twice a day using a fluoride toothpaste, cutting down on how often you eat and drink sugary foods and drinks and visiting your dentist regularly, as often as they recommend,” advised Dr Carter.

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News Release

Millions Missing Their Smile Factor

The UK’s leading oral health charity is urging people to change their attitudes towards their teeth and dentists, or risk losing their ‘Smile factor’ forever.

The British Dental Health Foundation has spent the last month promoting good oral health as part of its National Smile Month campaign. However, the Foundation believes the nation is still not making oral health a priority and people generally need to adopt a different attitude to their teeth and oral care if they are to keep their ‘Smile Factor’ – the theme of this year’s campaign.

The Foundation is asking the public to look again at their oral care and has published a new ten point checklist designed to challenge and change attitudes towards their teeth.

1. **Make prevention a priority**
   Cosmetic improvements and techniques have the potential to make a huge difference to the way teeth look, yet preventing your teeth and oral health from deteriorating is the best way to keep your ‘Smile Factor’. Visiting your dentist regularly, as often as they recommend, and maintaining a good oral health regime is a more simple solution.

2. **Pamper your teeth**
   Invest and spend as much time and expense on your teeth as your hair, skincare and clothes. Most people spend more on their hair care and clothes, and often see spending money on their oral care as an unnecessary luxury rather than a necessity.

3. **Don’t fear your dentist**
   The modern dentist is a distant echo of the fearful image that many people hold. New techniques and approaches to customer care means a visit to the dentist is no longer to be put-off or avoided.

4. **Have a plan and budget**
   Work with your dentist and develop a plan to keep and develop you ‘Smile Factor’ year on year. A plan will also help you to budget and spread any costs.

5. **Develop your knowledge about oral health**
   An informed patient has more chance of being a healthier patient. Information is now freely available about good oral health, approved products, fluoride and many other issues from the British Dental Health Foundation’s new website at www.dentalhealth.org. Confidential advice is also available by phoning the Foundation’s Dental Helpline on 0845 063 1188.

6. **Don’t skip brushing**
   Nearly half of the population has admitted to regularly skipping brushing their teeth, especially at bedtime. Make sure you keep up the basic recommended oral health routine of brushing for two minutes, twice a day, using a fluoride toothpaste.
7. **Give up smoking**
   In addition to increasing your risk of many life-threatening diseases, including mouth cancer, smoking causes bad breath and tooth staining which can seriously affect your ‘Smile Factor’.

8. **Take pride in your own natural teeth**
   Everyone’s teeth are different and you don’t need to have the perfect smile to have the ‘Smile Factor’. Keeping your mouth and teeth healthy should always be the priority. Retaining your own teeth throughout your whole life is something to be proud of.

9. **Your teeth need a good diet too**
   As a nation we often seem to be obsessed with diets and how we look, yet we rarely think about our teeth needing a good diet too. Cutting down on how often you have sugary food and drinks will help maintain good oral health.

10. **Count your smiles and kisses**
    Smiling is infectious and can make a huge difference to our personalities and relationships. If you can share and receive at least 25 smiles a day, we think you’ll help boost your ‘Smile Factor’. With great oral health you’ll also have the confidence to get up close and personal with friends and loved ones, to share a caring kiss, just in time for National Kissing Day on 21 June 2011 (1).

Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation, Dr Nigel Carter, said: “Following these ten tips will not only give you good all-round oral health, they will give you a renewed energy and the confidence to portray your smile on a daily basis.”

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**Editor’s Notes**

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For further information and expert interviews please contact the British Dental Health Foundation Press Office on 01788 539 792 or by emailing pr@dentalhealth.org

Websites: www.dentalhealth.org / www.smilemonth.org

Members of the public can contact the National Dental Helpline for free and impartial expert advice on 0845 063 1188 Monday to Friday.

The British Dental Health Foundation is an independent charity formed in 1971 that along with its global arm, the International Dental Health Foundation, is dedicated to improving oral health.

Chief Executive Dr Nigel Carter is delighted to accommodate most journalists for television, radio and telephone interviews and is available by appointment through the press office on 01788 539 792.

The Foundation hopes to surpass the success of last year’s campaign in which UK coverage exceeded 400 media articles, reaching a total circulation of approaching 50,000,000 British readers and viewers.

This included a range of high–profile consumer magazines and leading daily national tabloid and broadsheet papers.

This year will be the 35th year the National Smile Month campaign has been run, while the British Dental Health Foundation celebrates their 40th birthday in 2011. In September, the Smile Month event will run for the very first time in the UAE, run under the Foundation’s global arm of the International Dental Health Foundation.

National Smile Month is supported by four giants of good oral health care Oral–B, ORBIT Complete, Listerine and Macleans, who applaud the Foundation’s efforts to increase awareness of the importance of preventive dentistry.

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