

## **MANAGING TOOTH WEAR & DAHL OPTION**

### Why are worn down teeth a problem for people?

People may be concerned about

- The appearance of their worn teeth
- Sensitivity associated with hot or cold drinks or foods
- Difficulty or soreness whilst chewing
- The lifespan of their teeth

### Why are worn down teeth a problem for dentists?

It can be difficult to replace the lost tooth tissue in a reliable and natural looking way.

### Risk factors for tooth wear

- Acids from foods/drinks/stomach (see sheet on preventing tooth erosion)
- Grinding teeth or chewing fibrous/hard foods such as bones, betel nuts, fennel seeds
- Brushing excessively hard
- Usually, a combination of the above factors

### How do you treat worn down teeth?

#### Prevention

- Treatment is focused on preventing any further tooth loss
- If you are aware of any risk factors that we have discussed you should try and limit your frequency of exposure to these
- The use of a fluoride mouthwash daily will strengthen your teeth against wear
- In some people who grind their teeth, an appliance is made which fits over and protects the teeth

#### Treatment Options

There may be several options to rebuild your teeth. These include; crowns, onlays, veneers and white fillings. One popular option is to raise the bite using adhesive fillings (composites). This is known as 'Dahl' treatment.

#### The 'Dahl' Treatment Option

This technique has been successfully used for almost 30 years. The great advantage is that it is a less destructive treatment option as there is little or no preparation to the teeth. Essentially the teeth are built up with a white plastic filling material which is bonded to the tooth.

#### How will it feel?

- Initially the teeth will feel bulkier and high in the bite. Also, your back teeth will not be in contact. It usually takes patients several weeks to get used to this new bite
- It is unusual for patients to experience pain during this treatment; however, the bite may feel a little uncomfortable initially
- Your back teeth will come back into contact over a period of 4-6 months, however, in some patients this can take up to 1 year
- In very few patients (2-4%), the back teeth fail to come back into contact. If this occurs it may not concern you so no further treatment is necessary. In some patients we may have to bond fillings to the back teeth as well.
- In the long term these restorations may discolour or chip. This may necessitate further restorations which may be repair, renewals or different types of restorations (e.g., veneers/crowns). Any repairs during the first 12 months will be without charge. If we have to choose a different type of restoration during the 12 months, we will charge you the difference