

Fact

Sheet

How will smoking affect my mouth?

Many teenagers experiment with smoking because of peer pressure. It's portrayed as being "cool" and a grown up thing to do. You might also think the younger kids will look up to you, but you will be causing so much damage not only to your general health by increasing your chances of heart disease and lung cancer, but also causing damage to your mouth.

The first thing you notice about a smoker is their breath. It's doesn't smell particularly pleasant, especially when they are up close! Their teeth are usually stained with nicotine and quite often they show signs of gum disease. Most importantly, if you smoke you increase your risk of developing mouth cancer.

Here are some facts on how smoking affects your mouth:

- Bad breath
- Stained teeth
- Gum disease
- Loose teeth
- Healing takes longer after an extraction possibly leading to an infection
- Reduces ability to taste food properly
- Can cause mouth cancer

Look at these pictures.....do you really want a mouth like these!



GUM DISEASE



**ADVANCED
GUM DISEASE
LEADING TO
LOOSE TEETH**



**NICOTINE
STAINED
TEETH**



MOUTH CANCER

If you would like help to quit contact your local smoking cessation service or speak to your School Nurse.



Fact Sheet

Mouth Piercing - The Facts!

Body piercings are growing in popularity, especially amongst teenagers, the most fashionable being the mouth. Despite the fact there are regulations regarding the practice of body piercing there are numerous establishments that ignore age restrictions and sterilisation guidelines putting many teenagers at risk of developing infections, possible scarring and even life threatening injury.

If you are considering having a mouth piercing, be it your lip or tongue, perhaps you should consider all the risks before going ahead.

SO, WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Well the most common ones are infection and major blood loss. If the site of the piercing is not kept adequately clean, an infection can very quickly develop spreading bacteria throughout the body. There has been a case where a 15 year old girl developed an abscess on her brain.

The tongue also has a major blood supply. Many people experience severe blood loss after a tongue piercing and need to go to A&E as they can't stop the bleeding.



Quite often another problem we find is chipped front teeth. As the person talks the tongue obviously moves and the stud section of the bar comes into contact with the teeth. Over a period of time repeated contact between the stud and the teeth causes them to weaken and fragments of teeth break off. When you consider your front teeth are the most noticeable ones especially when you smile and talk, your appearance can be drastically changed.

Frequently the gum is worn away from behind the lower front teeth as the stud rubs against it. This can lead to sensitive teeth and in some cases bone loss which may result in mobile teeth.



Speech is very often affected. Many experience problems with talking as they are conscious of the bar and tend to hold their tongue in a different position to usual, making the pronunciation of words difficult. This can lead to embarrassment and may affect your confidence.

Finally, dental treatment can prove to be difficult if mouth piercings are in place. If you would like to have braces to straighten your teeth you may be refused treatment if you have mouth piercings. The bar and stud can interfere with the wires and brackets preventing the teeth from moving or may even cause injury.

So think carefully before having a mouth piercing. It may seem like a trendy thing to do and may annoy your parents, but it could be one of the biggest mistakes you make!