Dentists are being reminded of their duty to adhere to the National Institute for Health Clinical Excellence guidelines for dental appointment recalls. One point that has caused debate is that dentists in England are reportedly seeing patients more than they need to. According to the briefing, this change was necessitated by the NICE guidance on recall intervals represented a significant change for dentists and patients alike. Six-monthly check-ups have been the backbone of NHS dentistry since its formation. The opportunity to see healthy patients to detect disease before it was serious enough to produce symptoms and to institute a regular programme of preventive advice was the norm; therefore it has taken time for patients and the profession to adjust to this change.

“Some patients still have an expectation to be seen six-monthly. As you know, the guidance states that the appropriate interval will depend on an individual’s clinical and risk factors— and according to CDO’s letter, the dentist will take a patient’s views on board before making a final decision, so there is an element of agreeing this between patient and dentist.”

“The BDA agrees that recall intervals need to be tailored to the individual and based on the risk status of the patient. There are a wide range of risk factors to decide upon the recall interval, including the following major ones: Smoking or tobacco use, excessive alcohol use, cardiovascular disease, bleeding disorders, anti-coagulants, immunosuppression, diabetes, glucose medications, phenytoin, acid reflux, lack of fluoride, high caries rate in mothers and siblings, recent and previous periodontal disease, high sugar intake, high acid intake, new decay, anterior fillings, root caries, heavily restored dentition, mucosal lesions, poor oral health, plaque retention factors, low saliva flow, tooth wear, no fluoride, poor attendance pattern, and people with special needs.

“The guidance doesn’t necessarilly clarify ‘how many’ of the risk factors or ‘how bad’, these need to be to achieve an ‘at risk’ status, so interpreting what is an appropriate recall period for a given patient may not always be clear.”

### Infection Prevention

Richard Musgrave discusses the importance of cleaning.

### Better Oral Health

Colgate-delivers at the Dentistry Show.

### News in Brief

**Mammoth joke?**

A Red Cross charity shop in Umeå in northern Sweden has received an unlikely donation. Quite unlike the usual donations of clothes or furniture, the two volunteers who gave two sets of teeth from a prehistoric mammoth. They received the gift on April 18th and thought at first that it was an April fool’s joke. The teeth, which were in possession of a resident at an elderly resident’s home who had passed away, are to be checked out by the Swedish Board of Agriculture; if they are not of any monetary value then the charity shop will be allowed to display them.

**Art and science unite**

Art and science have united for a project needing 12,000 baby teeth to decorate a “coral castle”. The idea, which came from a meeting between Professor Sara Rankin, a biologist at Imperial College London, and the artist Gina Czarnecki, is aimed to inspire debate about adult stem cells. They say arguments about stem cells are focused mostly on the ethics of using embryos and that some scientists are trying to grow new teeth using dental pulp in milk teeth. Children are being asked to donate their teeth to the project, called “Palaces”, which will then create a magical sculpture out of them. The children won’t miss them as the tooth fairy will be given an IOU tooth fairy as they will then create a magical sculpture out of them. The artwork will go on display at the Bluecoat in Liverpool in December and then move to the Science Museum in London next year.

**Teen hits high notes**

A talented teenage singer who was diagnosed with oral cancer when he was just ten years old, has realised his dream of singing again. Eddie Masih was left with severe paralysis on one side of his face after undergoing oral cancer when he was just ten years old, has realised his dream of singing again. Teenage hits high notes

A talented teenage singer who was diagnosed with oral cancer when he was just ten years old, has realised his dream of singing again. Eddie Masih was left with severe paralysis on one side of his face after undergoing oral cancer when he was just ten years old, has realised his dream of singing again.

**Time for a re-call**

See low risk patients every two years, dentists are reminded.

Dentists are being reminded of their duty to adhere to the National Institute for Health Clinical Excellence guidelines for dental appointment recalls. One point that has caused debate is that dentists in England are reportedly seeing patients more than they need to. According to the briefing, this change was necessitated by the NICE guidance on recall intervals represented a significant change for dentists and patients alike. Six-monthly check-ups have been the backbone of NHS dentistry since its formation.

The opportunity to see healthy patients to detect disease before it was serious enough to produce symptoms and to institute a regular programme of preventive advice was the norm; therefore it has taken time for patients and the profession to adjust to this change.

Some patients still have an expectation to be seen six-monthly.

As you know, the guidance states that the appropriate interval will depend on an individual’s clinical and risk factors— and according to CDO’s letter, the dentist will take a patient’s views on board before making a final decision, so there is an element of agreeing this between patient and dentist.

Many patients want to see a dentist more frequently (either to pick up problems early, such as gum disease, or for reassurance about their oral health) and dentists have to change patient habits as well.

The BDA agrees that recall intervals need to be tailored to the individual and based on the risk status of the patient. There are a wide range of risk factors to decide upon the recall interval, including the following major ones:

- Smoking or tobacco use
- Excessive alcohol use
- Cardiovascular disease
- Bleeding disorders
- Anti-coagulants
- Immunosuppression
- Diabetes
- Glucose medications
- Phenytoin
- Acid reflux
- Lack of fluoride
- High caries rate in mothers and siblings
- Recent and previous periodontal disease
- High sugar intake
- High acid intake
- New decay
- Anterior fillings
- Root caries
- Heavily restored dentition
- Mucosal lesions
- Poor oral health
- Plaque retention factors
- Low saliva flow
- Tooth wear
- No fluoride
- Poor attendance pattern
- People with special needs.

“The guidance doesn’t necessarily clarify ‘how many’ of the risk factors or ‘how bad’, these need to be to achieve an ‘at risk’ status, so interpreting what is an appropriate recall period for a given patient may not always be clear.”

### Events

Bread and butter of the May 18-24, 2011 event was the British Dental Association annual conference and exhibition, which focused on the ethics of using embryos and that some scientists are trying to grow new teeth using dental pulp in milk teeth.

### Around the World

Elaine Halley on research and reading.

### MSc Blog

Richard Musgrave discusses the importance of cleaning.

### News

The future of dentistry. Students celebrate at awards.

### Infection Control Tribune

The importance of cleaning.

### Better Oral Health

Colgate delivers at the Dentistry Show.