

Teeth

Wednesday, 30 April 2014

Yesterday I went for my annual checkup to the dentist.

I've been going to the same practice for 65 years. Since my first milk teeth appeared. They still have those first charts from the 1940s.

It's quite odd, as I sit in reception, to think this is the longest constant place I've visited anywhere in the world. Homes, houses, offices change but every year (it used to be every 6 months) and sometimes more often I've been here.

First, hygienist. Scraping, chopping, polishing. Can be painful, always awkward (I run out of saliva) but terribly satisfying afterwards. Running my tongue over my teeth, for several days, they feel like purest ivory.

Then the dentist. X Rays, probing, pinching, prodding. Luckily, this time (and usually) my teeth are perfect. All still my own. In good shape.

I owe it all to my irritating habit of using tooth picks every moment. A piece of food either gets digested or removed seconds after it enters my mouth. It's a nervous tick. And keeps my gums healthy and teeth and breath clean.

And my regular visits to my dentist (now the fourth or fifth generation).