

# PRESS RELEASE



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## **OLDER PEOPLE RETAINING TEETH LEADS TO RISKS ABOUT ELDERLY DENTITION, WARNS MDDUS**

New figures revealing that more old people are retaining their teeth is leading to risks in the elderly dentition, warns the Medical and Dental Defence Union of Scotland (MDDUS).

A recent dental study suggests that 50% of over 65 year olds will retain their natural teeth within the next 20 years – substantially higher than has historically been the case.

MDDUS is warning that this has implications for the dental profession as decay patterns in elderly patients can be distinct from that found in the younger population.

In particular MDDUS is advising members to be aware of the increased risk of cervical caries in the elderly dentition and suggests an assessment of increased need for provision of preventive measures for elderly patients.

Claire Renton, new dental adviser with the UK-wide MDDUS says: "These measures can be simple things like instruction regarding interdental cleaning, advising on the use of fluoride supplements like mouthwash, or high Fluoride dose tooth paste.

"The problem is that the neck and root of the tooth is at greater risk of decay than the crown of the tooth in the elderly because often the gum has receded and exposed the softer, and more easily decayed, dentine.

"Elderly patients should be encouraged to attend their dentist regularly as cervical decay can be rapidly progressive and lead to greater treatment needs."

MDDUS says that coupled with accurate notes detailing the advice given, both patients and dentists would be better protected. "Patients would be protected from decay and dentists would be protected from allegations of failure to advise!"

Ends

For further information contact Colin Calder on 0141 616 2677 or 07850 510881.

### **Note to editors**

MDDUS is a medical and dental defence organisation providing access to professional indemnity and expert medico- and dento-legal advice for doctors, dentists and other healthcare professionals throughout the UK. For further information on MDDUS go to [www.mddus.com](http://www.mddus.com).