Gum disease affects more than half of Aussies aged 65 and over, according to the Australian Dental Association. (iStock)

# Don't delay dental checks

Happy Dental has been looking after patients from Geelong and surrounding areas for nearly 15 years. As a long standing team where you see the same familiar faces each time you come in, this small team is dedicated to caring for the needs of every patient, taking pride in supporting each patient to help them feel as comfortable as soon as they walk in the door.

The Happy Dental team encourages Geelong locals to get regular check ups – these are so important to look after the health of your teeth, but just as importantly, your gums as well!

Many people don't realise that the gums play a huge role in the general health of your mouth. If patients don't attend a dental clinic regularly for an exam and professional clean, the plaque and tartar left on the teeth can cause periodontal disease, which in the early stages, can cause red and bleeding gums.

If left untreated, the gums can begin to pull away from the teeth, forming spaces known as periodontal 'pockets.' Food, bacteria, and plaque begin to collect in the pockets, leading to infection and further damage, which can affect the bone that supports the teeth, resulting in teeth becoming loose and even falling out.

The Australian Dental Association (ADA) reports that more than 50 per cent of those aged 65 and over have gum disease, while periodontal disease and tooth decay are the two biggest threats to dental health.

However, the good news is that these conditions are easily treatable in the early stages – so make an appointment today.

**Happy Dental is located at 116 Shannon Avenue, Geelong West. To book an appointment, phone (03) 5229 6668 or visit www.happydental.com.au.**

# Serious heart disease is on the rise across Australia

The week beginning Monday, June 27 and ending Sunday, July 3 is Heart Failure Awareness Week.

With approximately 500,000 Australians affected and 61,000 lives claimed by heart failure each year, this equates to approximately one person dying of heart failure every three hours, and eight deaths each day of the year.

As the number one cause of hospitalisations in people aged 65 and above, heart failure is on the rise in Australia.

Despite the name, heart failure refers to the fact that the heart cannot keep up with the body's demands, rather than that it has stopped or failed.

As people survive heart attacks and other acute heart diseases, their likelihood of developing heart failure increases.

However, with early diagnosis, treatment and lifestyle changes, a person with heart failure can reduce their risk of hospitalisation, feel better, and live a longer, healthier life.

It's important to be vigilant of any symptoms you may be experiencing. These include things such as nausea, increased heart rate and sweating, persistent coughing or wheezing, swelling in the abdomen, legs, ankles and feet, unexplained fatigue or tiredness and shortness of breath.

Your doctor will complete a physical exam and ask you a series of questions. They are also likely to run tests including blood tests, chest x-rays, electrocardiograms (ECG) and stress tests on an exercise bike or treadmill.

Treating heart failure can be relatively straightforward, with a variety of medicines available, as well as surgeries and other medical devices. Lifestyle changes are also extremely important to be implemented, and can bring about a variety of positives to ensure your heart health doesn't get any worse.

Approximately one Aussie dies of heart failure every three hours. (iStock)

**For more information, speak to your GP or visit www.hearts4hearts.org.au**

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