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## Devon dentists finish the 'world's toughest row'

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Cover photograph Ben Duffy

# Reduce Dental Anxiety

## Dental Anxiety Significantly Reduced with Breakthrough Microcurrent Treatment

It's quite usual for many of us to become anxious or even develop a phobia about going to the dentist, and for some this can become very extreme. Almost half of adults in the UK have a fear of the dentist and 12% will suffer from an extreme dental anxiety.

However, a new form of technology is helping to combat this; a recent study on a portable cranial electrotherapy stimulation (CES) device

called the Alpha-Stim demonstrated how it can significantly reduce dental anxiety.

And it's now starting to catch on with dentists across the UK and Ireland.

A study in Nigeria was carried out to assess the therapeutic efficacy of three treatments for dental anxiety – relaxation therapy (REL), cranial electrotherapy stimulation (CES), and a combination treatment of relaxation therapy

and CES for the treatment of dental anxiety. 40 men and women over the age of 18 took part in the trial. They had all been suffering oral pain conditions for at least three months, verified by a dentist, and had high anxiety scores on the Modified Dental Anxiety Scale (MDAS) of over 14.25

They were split into 4 groups and randomly allocated to one of four groups – the relaxation

### Alpha-Stim Cranial Electrotherapy Stimulation (CES) A **unique** way to offer a safe method of **relaxation** to your patients

- ✓ **Easy application;** can be placed by dentist or dental nurse, with minimal training required
- ✓ **Easy for patients;** very little is required of the patient, they simply have to allow application
- ✓ **Safe;** very few reported side effects
- ✓ **Fast;** patients will be more relaxed and so more likely to allow the speedy completion of treatment
- ✓ **Effective;** many studies confirm the effectiveness of Alpha-Stim [see [www.themicrocurrentsite.co.uk/research-landing-page.aspx](http://www.themicrocurrentsite.co.uk/research-landing-page.aspx)]
- ✓ **Profitable;** in addition to being able to complete treatment faster and with greater ease, many dentists offer the Alpha-Stim to patients for a fee per treatment
- ✓ **Enjoy;** at the end of a stressful day, take the device home and enjoy a session to recharge your own batteries!

**Boost your business**  
**Helps calm nervous patients in minutes**  
**Far less stress for both patient and dentist**  
**Makes it easier to carry out work on patients**



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[www.alpha-stim.co.uk](http://www.alpha-stim.co.uk), [info@themicrocurrentsite.co.uk](mailto:info@themicrocurrentsite.co.uk), 01487 208041



therapy group, the CES treatment group, both treatments simultaneously group and the no treatment control group. During the relaxation therapy session, subjects listened to 30 minutes of relaxation training that was played on an MP-3 audio recorder via head phones. Subjects in the combined relaxation and CES treatment group did a 45 minute CES treatment while listening to the relaxation instructions. Subjects in the CES treatment group completed a 45 minute CES treatment.

Each of the 3 treatments significantly decreased dental anxiety from pre-test to post-test. The study concluded that the CES was as effective at decreasing dental anxiety as relaxation therapy and the combined treatment group, though CES is easier to use compared to learning relaxation techniques.

The device used in the study was an Alpha-Stim. The Alpha-Stim AID is a CES device and one of the most researched in its class, with more than 60 completed research studies and published reports, and several more underway. It has a sleek, modern design with digital display, similar in look to the latest phone or i-pod. Peer-reviewed published outcome studies show that 93% of patients report significant relief from their anxiety, stress, depression and insomnia after use. The effects of Alpha-Stim are usually immediate, cumulative and long lasting. Because of this, many practitioners use the Alpha-Stim in their treatment programmes at their clinics, as well as provide or advise the device for their patients to use at home.

**So I stopped going to the dentist altogether as my anxiety became too much to handle; it was easier not to go.**

The Alpha-Stim microcurrent waveform activates particular groups of nerve cells that are located at the brainstem. These groups of nerve cells produce the chemicals serotonin and acetylcholine which can affect the chemical activity of nerve cells that are both nearby and at more distant sites in the nervous system. By changing the electrical and chemical activity of certain nerve cells in the brainstem, the Alpha-Stim appears to amplify activity in some areas of the brain, and diminish activity in others. This induces feelings of calmness, relaxation and increased mental focus, decreasing stress, reducing agitation and stabilising mood.

These effects can be produced after a single treatment, and repeated treatments have been shown to increase the strength and duration of these effects. In some cases, effects have been stable and permanent, suggesting that the electrical and chemical changes made by Alpha-Stim technology have led to a re-tuning back to normal functioning.

Colette Brennan has experienced the

transforming effects of the Alpha-Stim first hand. Colette is 42, married and based in Mullingar, Ireland. Her visits to the dentist became ever more stressful and her anxiety became so acute she was physically sick.

Colette takes up her story. "Usually my visits to the dentist have involved getting under IV sedation even for just one filling! Otherwise I would be physically sick and I wouldn't be able to cope. I also needed to have someone with me in the surgery as a distraction. The whole smell of the place hits me as soon as I get in the door. I get very anxious, near to tears, before I even see a dentist. And as soon as my dentist opens the door to greet me the tears come down my cheeks and my anxiety reaches a peak. When they try and get me to open my mouth, they can look, but they're not allowed to touch.

My anxiety stems from one incident at the dentist which took place about 13 years ago. I went in to get my tooth extracted. I didn't chew on the plug for long enough and I bled really badly. That really scared me. The dentist was trying to take a tooth out and he let it fall in my mouth and it got lodged at the back of my throat. The dentist roared at me and I bit his finger by mistake. He sent me out with lots of dried blood around my mouth. I felt so anxious and embarrassed.

So I stopped going to the dentist altogether as my anxiety became too much to handle; it was easier not to go. If the pain went away, I wouldn't bother to go. Then after two years without treatment I made myself book an appointment – I'd left it so long that I had to have two root canals, 4 fillings and one extraction. I didn't want to let things get that bad again, but my anxiety was a real problem – I had to try to overcome it somehow.

So I talked to my new dentist, Grainne O' Rourke from Mullingar Dental Centre who was very patient and understanding. She introduced me to an amazing device called the Alpha-Stim. It's a tiny little box that sends relaxing microcurrents via two ear clips. So now when I go to the dentist it's a completely different story. I don't even need to be sedated.

I couldn't believe it at first; I thought the nurse, Tara Mullally was tricking me. But when she adjusted the level of microcurrents I could feel myself adjusting to my situation and actually relaxing. I wasn't as conscious of what was going on.



**Colette Brennan** experienced the transforming effects of the Alpha-Stim

It's really funny the way you can feel the vibrations in your ear. I can talk to my dentist normally now and I don't lose my breath. I do have a little bit of a wobble when I'm there, but not to the extent that they have to stop what they're doing. The Alpha-Stim has worked for me. It has made a remarkable difference especially on my second and third visit.

Now before I go to the dentist, I still have an initial feeling of anxiety – but not to the extent I used to. But once I'm there, I'm very relaxed. No anxiety or panic attacks. I'll now never miss a single appointment.

I've been surprising everyone with my new attitude. And my husband thinks it's hilarious – seeing the dramatic change in me. My friends can't believe the amount of work I've been able to have done without any panic or anxiety. I made an appointment myself this time for my next check-up which I would never have done previously. All-in-all it's been an amazing and positive experience."

Clinical Director at Mullingar Dental Centre, Dr Anne O'Donnell comments, "I've been using the Alpha-Stim on my own patients as well with great results and I hope to introduce other dentists to the Alpha Stim, as well as introducing it directly to patients."

**The Alpha-Stim is currently being used by the NHS to treat anxiety. For more information please visit [www.alpha-stim.co.uk](http://www.alpha-stim.co.uk) or call 01487 208041. ■**