



FIT FOR LIFE

Not down in the mouth

Even dental work and bone grafts can't stop Carol Westmorland smiling

I share, I think it can be agreed, many an exciting experience in this column and, I believe, this month's topic is no exception. Those of you who have kept up with my cycling shenanigans will be aware that I am, as a consequence of an historic spill and Caldbeck cattle grid, now going down the road of a dental implant.

Having suffered trauma, my upper jawbone requires additional bone for strength.

I want you to join me in the sunlit dental surgery that, once I had hung my very sparkly (and hugely admired) shopper on its peg, was set for magic. Lights sent colours dancing around the walls of the room. Ambience is key and that, together with a long walk beforehand, calmed me.

I then spent the best part of two hours in the expert hands of Jack.

From one of my very juicy veins, blood is taken to make platelet rich plasma (PRP). My blood - in its test-tube - goes for a spin at breakneck speed in a machine. The result is a membrane, rather like a sticking plaster, covering the area Jack has filled with bone.

We had opted for a xenograft; not my own bone and, frankly, no more



Going for a spin - making platelet rich plasma



'DISAPPOINTEDLY, I ONLY SEE A SMALL AMOUNT OF BRUISING'

needs said about that.

While I do nothing at all other than promise to behave, and by behave we are talking about keeping away from high-intensity exercise and alcohol - one of those being easier than the other - the clever PRP gets to work. It protects and quickens the healing of my soft tissue, comforts and persuades the bone to restore. It can take between four and six months for the bone to grow.

Disappointedly, I only see a small amount of bruising and, I ask you, surely a girl should be allowed something to garner a sympathetic hug. No?

The outlook seems bright. Asked today (day three) how I felt, I honestly could say suffering from a cold would be worse. And my only wobble? Worrying that laughter caused by my husband had disturbed my stitches. I am assured it hadn't.

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