

EATING SUGAR

Why are sweets, a lot of sweets a problem?

Timing

In dentistry we have now learnt that it is not how much sugar you eat that rots your teeth, it is how often during the day you have sugar. So, it is possible to have sugar and your teeth not decay. What happens is- the sugar goes into the mouth and then the bacteria that live in the mouth digest the carbohydrates and form acid. In 20 minutes that acid can start to dissolve the tooth and make a hole. This is where the timing comes in.



because sugar is hidden in everything and it is now becoming very trendy to reject fluoride. People are deciding to go fluoride-free with no scientific reason. People are using a herbal toothpaste or natural toothpaste, but the biggest thing that will protect teeth against holes is fluoride in toothpaste twice a day. When using toothpaste without fluoride you might as well not use it or you might as well just use water. **Fluoride is our friend and it needs to be put on the teeth twice a day to protect the teeth** against that constant attack that we get from sugar.

Chewing gum

What else can we do if people are eating a lot of sweets? Chewing gum is really good. It is not what is in the chewing gum, it is the saliva that it makes us produce. The extra saliva will actually protect our teeth against decay. We can prevent decay by making sure that we do not have sugar too often and when we do we can eat chewing gum.

Alkaline diet

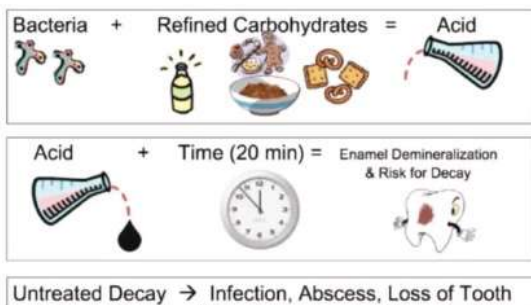
The other thing that we have realised lately is that we can also alkalize our diet. We know it is very important for the gut nowadays to actually neutralise the acid in our gut but we can do the same in the mouth because acid is bad for our teeth. Things like avocados, sweet potatoes,

spinach, broccoli and cheese, for example are extremely good choices as they act as an alkalizers, neutralising the effect of the sugar.



Switch Witch

One of the biggest tips that we use in dentistry is to promote this thing called the Switch Witch. There are books about her, there are games about her. The children collect all their sweets for the Switch Witch and she exchanges them for a present. So, it is a good way for children to barter their sweets and get rid of a lot of them.



Untreated Decay → Infection, Abscess, Loss of Tooth

The saliva that lives in our mouth protects the teeth against that sugar attack, it re-mineralises the damage, but for about 2 hours until saliva does its work, the teeth are really at risk of decay. So, if they then get another sugar hit during those 2 hours the hole is going to get bigger rather than repairing. It is not about not having sugar- the mouth can repair itself against sugar – it is about timing. **We have to have at least 2 to 3 hours between every sugar attack.** So, it is better for children or ourselves to eat all the sweets in one go rather than have them a little bit at a time throughout the day.

Fluoride

The second thing that will protect our mouths against sugar and bacteria is fluoride. We have a problem at the moment

