

Erosion – Diet Advice

What we eat and drink has an effect on our mouths and teeth. This sheet gives information on the role of a healthy diet in relation to a healthy mouth and how sugar and acid in the diet affects our teeth.

Your general health and your resistance to many diseases depend a lot on eating a healthy, balanced diet.

Your eating and drinking habits affect the health of your teeth.

Dental plaque is a soft sticky substance that builds up on your teeth. It is mostly made up of bacteria, which feed on sugar from food and drink, producing acids as a waste product.

The acid attacks the teeth by dissolving the minerals in the tooth substance. If this happens too often, tooth decay results.

Acids in fizzy drinks and food can also dissolve away the tooth surface. All fizzy drinks (including diet brands) and fizzy mineral water, squashes and fruit drinks are acidic to varying degrees. Other drinks to be avoided include fruit teas, lemon tea, lemon in hot water and many alcoholic beverages including alcopops.

After an acid attack teeth can repair themselves, given the opportunity.

Most dental problems can be avoided if you remove the plaque by brushing twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste and don't have sugary snacks and/or acidic drinks too often during the day.

Tips:

- Brush 2x a day with a fluoride toothpaste.
- Wait at least half an hour after eating and drinking before brushing.
- Mouthwashes are not a substitute for brushing.
- If you have been advised by your dentist that you need to use floss or interdental brushes, it is important to try and do this at least once a day. Plaque quickly hardens between the teeth and becomes difficult to remove.
- Sensitive toothpaste clean equally well, if you have sensitive teeth use Sensodyne.
- If you suffer from erosion drink any acidic drinks through a straw as cold as possible.
- Brush before breakfast. Not after.
- Between meals you should only have safe drinks that are not sugary or acidic. Milk and water are safe drinks. Tea and coffee without sugar are ok.
- Try to avoid snacks between meals. If you do eat snacks-snack on safe foods; Fruit, vegetables, toast, crumpets, pitta bread are safe snacks

Healthy eating and good brushing leads to less dental treatment!