



Sensitive Teeth?

An estimated one in eight people suffer from tooth hypersensitivity. Perhaps use a toothpaste specifically designed for people with sensitive teeth, for at least a month or two. These products help by filling up the nerve-ending tubules and blocking them from irritation, and are stamped with the American Dental Association's seal of acceptance. Also be sure to use a brush with soft, supple bristles.

Chewing Sugarless Gum

If you want to take an extra step to help prevent cavities, chewing sugarless gum may be just what the dentist ordered.

The American Dental Association offers this advice:

- Choose sugarless gum to help boost saliva production and wash away bacteria.
- Increased saliva can raise tooth exposure to calcium and phosphate, both of which strengthen tooth enamel.
- Chew the gum for about 20 minutes after a meal.
- Chewing gum, however, is not a substitute for regular brushing and flossing.

What your dentist really wants you to know

From brushing to bad breath, knowing these eight facts, will make both you and your dentist smile at your next appointment:

- Your mouth is the window to your overall health
- You may not be brushing and flossing adequately
- There is such a thing as over-brushing
- Bleeding gums are NOT okay
- Bad breath might be a dental problem
- Cavities aren't just from eating too much sugar

- Children should start health habits early
- You need to visit your dentist more

8 Foods and Drinks to Avoid for a Healthy Mouth

1. Ice – good for a drink to melt, not to chew
2. Citrus Fruits – can cause fast enamel erosion and tooth decay. Simply rinse with water after eating
3. Wine – specifically red wine. Stains the teeth and heavy acids
4. Chewy Candy – sugar corrodes teeth and usually sticks to your gums and teeth
5. Sour Candy – like chewy candy, sugars and acids but also stays in your mouth for a long time.
6. Crackers – easily stick to your teeth and contain carbohydrates that, over time, break down into sugars
7. Vinegar – known to trigger tooth decay. To avoid this, rinse out your mouth with water after consuming large amounts
8. Coffee – can produce lasting stains on your teeth, but also contains acids that weaken tooth enamel. Can't cut this one out? Try rinsing thoroughly with water after consumption or at least cut back by a cup or two



This Popular Artificial Sweetener Is Actually Great for Your Teeth

There's one artificial sweetener out there that has some surprising health benefits, and it might just be in the gum you're chewing right now: **xylitol**.

Xylitol is a sugar alcohol that's predominantly used to sweeten breath mints and chewing gum, and it's naturally occurring in the fibers of many fruits and vegetables, including berries, mushrooms, oats, and corn. Whereas table sugar is known to cause cavities, xylitol actually has the opposite effect: Due to its chemical makeup, it actually helps repair damaged tooth enamel and can prevent cavities by starving cavity-causing bacteria in the mouth. It's also been shown to inhibit the growth of certain pathogens (including strep) in the mouth and throat.



Caring for New Teeth

Protecting kids' health may start with avoiding certain homeopathic teething tablet products, but it doesn't end there. Dentists say parents should start maintaining the health of their children's teeth as soon as they first appear. Your child's chompers may be new on the scene, but keeping them looking that way will require some daily upkeep. To better care for your tots' teeth, experts from the American Dental Association (ADA) say it's important to know a few "tooth-truths." Here's when parents and caregivers should begin performing certain dental health tasks:

- **When to start brushing.** Your child's grin may still be sparsely populated with teeth, but those few teeth still need brushing. Because decay can happen as soon as teeth first appear, the ADA recommends picking up a tube of fluoride toothpaste when teeth first come through.
- **How much toothpaste to use.** Until your little one is old enough to brush on his or her own, brush your child's teeth twice a day with a child-sized toothbrush. Top the bristles with a smear of toothpaste about the size of a grain of rice. For children three or older, use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste.
- **When to schedule the first dentist visit.** The first dental visit should take place after the first tooth appears but no later than your child's first birthday, according to the ADA. That's because kids can get cavities as soon as they get teeth.
- **When to start flossing.** If any teeth are touching, it's time to start flossing between them. Consider using a child-friendly plastic flossing tool to make the task easier.

A Five-Minute Oral Cancer Screening can save Your Life

Nearly 50,000 Americans will be diagnosed with oral cancer this year; only about half will be alive five years after diagnosis, according to the Oral Cancer Foundation.



If found in the early stages, oral cancer patients have an 80 to 90 percent survival rate, but the majority of patients are diagnosed in later stages of the disease, often after the cancer has spread, according to the foundation. One Dentist says, "For a dentist, there's no higher calling, we improve patients' smiles, self-esteem and general health, and that's great. But saving a life is something you don't get to do every day — there's nothing more noble than that."