



Taking Care of your Teeth Food

Understanding Plaque and Its Effects

Plaque is a sticky, colorless film of bacteria that constantly forms on our teeth. It develops when foods containing carbohydrates (sugars and starches) such as milk, soft drinks, raisins, cakes, and candy are frequently left on the teeth. The bacteria in the mouth feed on these foods and produce acids. Over time, these acids destroy tooth enamel, leading to tooth decay and cavities. If plaque is not removed, it can also accumulate on the tooth roots under the gumline and cause the breakdown of the bone supporting the tooth, leading to serious dental issues.

Preventive Measures for Healthy Teeth

To keep teeth healthy and prevent problems like cavities, bad breath, and gum disease, follow these steps:

Brush Twice a Day – Brush your teeth at least twice daily, once in the morning and again before bedtime.

Floss Daily – Flossing helps remove food particles and plaque from between the teeth where toothbrushes cannot reach.

Massage Your Gums – Gently massage your gums with your fingers to improve blood circulation and gum health.

Visit the Dentist Regularly – Schedule dental check-ups and cleanings to detect and prevent problems early.

Limit Sugary Foods and Drinks – Reduce the intake of sugary and fizzy drinks, which contribute to plaque formation.

Consume Calcium-Rich Foods – A diet rich in calcium (such as milk, cheese, and yogurt) strengthens teeth and bones.

Food for Healthy Teeth and Gums

A balanced diet plays a vital role in maintaining strong and healthy teeth. Here are some beneficial foods:

Dairy Products (Milk, Yogurt, Cheese): High in calcium, these help strengthen teeth and bones.

Vitamin C-Rich Foods: Vegetables like bell peppers and citrus fruits such as oranges, kiwis, lemons, pineapples, and strawberries help maintain healthy gums.



Crunchy Fruits and Vegetables (Apples, Cucumbers, Carrots): These foods naturally clean teeth by removing plaque and food particles.

Onions: Have antibacterial properties that reduce the risk of gum disease and provide a good exercise for gums.

Vitamin D Sources (Sunlight, Fish, Egg Yolks, Cod Liver Oil): Vitamin D enhances calcium absorption, which is crucial for strong teeth and bones.

Did You Know?

The first toothbrushes were tree twigs! People chewed on the tips of twigs to spread out the fibers, which were then used to clean their teeth.

Foods to Avoid for Better Dental Health

Certain foods can harm dental health and should be limited:

- **Carbonated Soft Drinks (Cola, Soda):** Contain acids and sugar that erode tooth enamel.
- **Sticky Candies (Caramel, Taffy):** These adhere to teeth for a long time and can cause enamel damage.
- **Potato Chips:** They contain starch that can lead to tooth decay and offer no nutritional value.
- **Refined Flour Products (White Bread, Pasta):** Opt for whole wheat alternatives like brown bread and brown rice for better dental health.

Maintaining oral hygiene is essential for overall well-being. Brushing and flossing daily, eating a balanced diet, and visiting the dentist regularly can prevent dental problems. Choosing the right foods while avoiding harmful ones ensures strong, healthy teeth and gums for a lifetime.