

# Smiles Better!

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## THE WHOLE TOOTH AND NOTHING BUT THE TOOTH!

There are so many dental myths, people always want to do the best for their teeth, so i've listed a few below and set the record straight.

### **BRUSHING AFTER EATING CAN DO MORE HARM THAN GOOD**

Although it is important to brush morning and evening, it isn't necessary to do so after every meal. In fact, it can do more harm than good - particularly after eating acidic foods such as citrus fruits, as brushing will wash away tooth enamel that has been weakened by the acid. Leave teeth cleaning for at least an hour after eating. It is also better to brush teeth before breakfast, not after, as this prevents dental erosion by coating the teeth with fluoride.

### **SUCKING AN ASPIRIN WON'T HELP A SORE TOOTH**

If you have toothache then aspirin may help - but only if swallowed. Applying one directly to the surface of an aching tooth may burn the soft, sensitive tissues in your mouth.

### **ADULTS CAN STILL GET CAVITIES - ESPECIALLY AFTER 60**

Children do get more cavities than adults and the cavity risk does slow down after the age of 20. However, as more adults are keeping their teeth, this risk increases again around the age of 60, when gums begin to recede. As the gums pull away from the teeth, the roots are exposed, causing a cavity.

### **AN ELECTRIC BRUSH IS THREE TIMES BETTER THAN A MANUAL**

Manual brushes tend to be used in a sawing, side-to-side motion, which can wear away the gums and the neck of the teeth. Electric toothbrushes are thought to be better for the teeth, because they vibrate in three directions, which means they are more far-reaching. They should be used in conjunction with flossing.

### **CHOCOLATE PROTECTS AGAINST DECAY**

If you crave something sweet, it is better to eat chocolate than sticky sweets. researchers in Japan found that the part of the cocoa bean from which chocolate is made has an antibacterial content that could protect against tooth decay. While any sugar in the mouth will increase the risk of decay, this could offset the high sugar levels in chocolate

### **FIZZY WATER CAN DISSOLVE YOUR TEETH**

Avoid fizzy water as it contains carbonic acid, which can dissolve teeth enamel. Drinking fluoridated water is linked to a reduction in tooth decay and improved dental health.

### **DRINKING FRUIT JUICE CAN HARM HEALTHY TEETH**

Many parents give their children fruit juice instead of fizzy drinks - but while the nutritional content is better, their acidity can cause problems. Dentist Dr Andre Hedger says some fruit juices have a pH level higher than 5.5 - the level at which teeth can dissolve.

### **PROFESSIONAL CLEANING WILL NOT LOOSEN TEETH**

Having a scale and polish may feel quite invasive - but teeth are firmly held by supporting tissues of the periodontium, including bone.

### **MOUThWASHES WITH ALCOHOL CAN LEAD TO BAD BREATH**

Some research claims that alcohol-based mouthwashes actually feed bacteria and lead to bad breath. They may also dry the mouth. Some studies have linked high levels of alcohol in the mouth to oral cancer.