

SOME ADVICE ON FOOD & DRINK



"I have sunny delight every day in my lunch box "

Some Advice on Food & Drink

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Children as young as three years have rampant caries or tooth decay which require them to undergo long dental treatments under general anaesthetic.

General anaesthetic always carries risk and sadly a 5 year old child died at a dental practice in Carlow in recent times.

In Ireland our dental decay rate in children is among the worst in Europe as measured by the DMF index which refers to the number of Drilled, Missing or Filled teeth at the age of 8yrs.

Progressive health orientated regions such as Sweden have a DMF index of 0.4 whereas Ireland has an index of at least twenty times this rate at 8.0

In Sweden children are seen three times each year by their dentist from the age of two.

In the Czech republic children are seen three or four times per year.

In Ireland children have their first dental check paid for by the state at the age of 5yrs (officially) but often are not seen till

much later and this is a limited examination in schools with primitive equipment relative to well equipped privately funded surgeries where examination is done under magnification with loops or better again with a microscope with superb illumination.

At 3 years children have their full complement of twenty primary teeth.

In order that children have good teeth they should mostly drink water or milk.

The teeth of children and young adults are more vulnerable to acid attack because the enamel is more porous in young developing teeth.

It is not just the amount of acid or sugar that is consumed but the frequency. It is much better to have sugary/acid foods all at once close to or at proper mealtimes as eating food increases salivary flow which helps dilute acid and reduced their harmful effects. The delivery of an acid drink such as orange juice with a straw reduces the amount of acid making contact with the teeth and should ideally be followed by a drink of water.

Ireland has the highest consumption of Cola in Europe. 120 litres per capita per year!

Each time we brush our teeth a very small amount of enamel is lost that is later re-mineralised by our saliva but if you brush immediately after an acid intake the amount lost is increased by 4000 times. The ideal time to brush is about one hour after such foods when the pH of the mouth has returned to near neutral pH.

Ph <5.5 demineralises teeth.

Diet or ordinary Cola has a pH of 2.6

Orange juice pH 3.8

Cranberry juice pH 3.8

Ribena "toothkind" has a pH of 4.7 which causes some demineralization and has an undesirable chemical content.

Ribena is loaded with glucose and fructose sugars all producing further acid in the mouth.



SEALANTS PLACED ON PRIMARY MOLARS AGED 4 YEARS REDUCES THE POSSIBILITY OF DECAY BY 25%

EUROPEAN ACADEMY OF PAEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

If a drink is produced with artificial flavours and sweeteners it may be regarded as safe for teeth but with unhealthy chemical content.

Solutions with a lot of free acid are most damaging to teeth. Measuring the Ph of a drink is not often as straight forward as a drink may have an acidic pH but actually have very few hydrogen ions present. Cola is such a drink and has an acidic pH of 2.5 but a low hydrogen ion concentration. To assess the amount of total acid in a drink it has become standard practice to measure the titratable acidity.

Alkali is gradually added to a drink until the pH reaches neutrality. This total volume of alkali required to increase the pH to neutrality is reported.

A drink with the larger titratable acidity value will cause more erosion.

Grapefruit juice has a titrateable acidity of 9.5

Erosion is essentially chemical meltdown or destruction of the enamel.

Drinks that have a low pH [acidic] and a high titrateable acidity [lots of free acid] are the worst combination and cause erosion and tooth surface loss.

Foods to generally avoid

Any sticky sugary foods eg.raisins (1.5grams of sugar per gram!)

Toffee, Caramel, Hard or chewy sweets

Honey, Golden Syrup, Treakle, Meringues, Donuts Lollipops, Curleywurly,Liquid sticky caramel eg twix, snickers, mars bars.lunch bars etc

Candy floss

Biscuits generally, Sugar or Honey coated breakfast cereals

Jelly, fruit sweets such as opal fruits, wine gums,fruit pastilles

Acidic fruit snacks eg, oranges ,petit filous (little rascals)

Coke, Diet Coke ,Pepsi, 7UP,Sprite,

Diet Sprite ,Lilt, Lucozade,Cola Fizzy

Orange,Diet Fizzy

orange,Cherryaid ,Appletize, Cidona ,

Rockshandy etc

Sunny delight, Capri-Sun, Fruice, Innocent smoothie drinks (Citrus fruit based)

Fruit herbal teas

Ribena ("everykind") juices generally

Sweet drinks or even milk are not a good idea just before bedtime because when we sleep our mouths go dry as our salivary glands sleep and so the acid produced from the carbohydrate in the milk does not get diluted by the saliva as usual.

READ THE LABEL

Sugar is disguised by labels stating "NO SUGAR ADDED" but the juice drink is already loaded with natural sugars such as fructose, glucose, maltose or dextrose.

SAFE SNACKS

Cheese Water biscuits, Ryvita, Cream Crackers, Breadsticks, Rice Cakes (with no chocolate), Homemade scones, Blueberry muffins

Tomato, Cucumber, Celery, Peppers, Carrot , Olives, Melon, Banana, Pear,

Water melon, Melon, Kiwi,Avocado ,Nuts (if no allergy) ,Peanut butter, Popcorn (Plain with cheese or homemade)

Cold meats (ham ,turkey, chicken, bacon etc)

Fish (tuna, salmon, smoked salmon)

Pate (liver or seafood)

Rice & Pasta

The trick with chocolate is to have it all in a short period of time

SAFE DRINKS

Milk , Water

Note: very carbonated waters are associated with mal- absorption of calcium

A juice drink of 50% Carrot juice & 50%fresh orange juice is a good option

In this pamphlet "some advice on food & drink" the content is gathered from up to date research carried out by various dental schools in the UK & Ireland.

Knowledge is strength!

Prevention is better than cure.