

POND SQUARE DENTAL

PATIENT INFORMATION

REDUCING THE RATE OF TOOTH DECAY

Tooth decay is caused by bacteria that accumulate on our teeth. Each tooth has three layers to the part of the tooth we see above the gum. The hard outer shell is the enamel, then lies the dentine, and in the middle is a hollow chamber containing the nerve and blood vessels.

Initially the bacteria feed off the food and drink we consume, creating a small hole in the enamel of a tooth. Once through the enamel, the bacteria feed off the dentine, the juicy inner part of the tooth. When the decay has entered the dentine, that is when a filling is required. If the bacteria causing the decay get near to or into the hollow chamber containing the nerve and blood vessels, that is when a root filling is needed.

MAKING OUR TEETH STRONGER

Fluoride in toothpaste and mouth rinses makes our teeth stronger and more resilient to tooth decay. If you are prone to tooth decay you should use a high fluoride toothpaste only available on prescription from the dentist.

Higher fluoride toothpastes include:

Colgate Total

Sensodyne Pronamel

Mouth rinses include:

Colgate Flourigard Daily AF

Sensodyne Pronamel Daily

Highest Fluoride Toothpastes (prescription only):

Duraphat 2800 or 5000

These are all available at the practice

LOVE YOUR SMILE

Pond Square Dental, 26 Highgate High Street, Highgate, London N6 5JG.

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REDUCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BACTERIA

Fluoride toothpastes and rinses also affect the way bacteria work and so reduce their effectiveness.

MECHANICALLY REMOVING THE BACTERIA

We do this by brushing, and using interdental cleaning devices such as floss and interdental brushes.

We should brush our teeth twice a day – first thing in the morning before breakfast and last thing at night before going to bed.

Flossing and using interdental brushes removes plaque from in between teeth.

You can use plaque disclosing tablets to check how good you are with your tooth brushing/cleaning.

Our hygienists will also clean your teeth. If you are not very effective at cleaning your teeth, or are prone to tooth decay, you should attend the hygienist more frequently.

DIET

It is not just what we eat or drink but the frequency we eat or drink, and the timing of this.

From a dentist's point of view, the best way to reduce the risk of tooth decay is to minimise the time you are eating. This means sticking to 3 meals, with little or no snacking and eating the meals in as concise a time as is reasonable. This includes all healthy foods and any drink other than still water.

Picking at food, as an example a bowl of grapes, over a period of time, greatly increases the risk and rate of tooth decay. Snacking at night time, when saliva is sparse, is also likely to cause tooth decay rapidly.

FISSURE SEALANTS

A final way to reduce the risk of tooth decay is to have sealants painted on to the biting surfaces of back (molar and premolar) teeth. This is usually done by our hygienists for children and young adults.

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