

PATIENT ADVICE : ACID EROSION OF TEETH

A significant problem in dentistry is the wear of teeth, this can be due to a number of factors, a main one being Acid Erosion. Some degree of erosion is common and mild erosion will not give rise to any symptoms. In some cases of erosion the teeth can become sensitive and cause pain after consuming hot or cold foods. Chemical erosion is the result of acid softening the enamel. If the teeth are then brushed with abrasive toothpaste the problem is made worse. The result is that the "softened" enamel is often spat down the sink.

The main types of acid which are dangerous for your teeth are

Citric acid Lemons, Grapefruit, Oranges and their Juice

Lactic acid Yoghurt, Fromage frais, Cottage cheese

Phosphoric acid Coke, Diet coke, Pepsi, Diet Pepsi, Fizzy drinks, Vinegar, Pickles

Malic acid Apples

Oxalic acid Rhubarb

It is important to note that all fizzy drinks - even those with artificial sweeteners and fizzy water can cause erosion if taken too often.

Preventative measures

1. Limit the number of episodes when acidic foods or drinks are taken. Try to eat all your fruit at one time of the day.
2. Do not clean your teeth immediately after taking acidic foods or drinks (leave at least an hour).
3. If possible rinse your mouth with milk or fluoride gel (Colgate Fluoriguard Gel-Kam) after eating or drinking acidic foods.
4. Drink fruit through a wide bore straw thus getting the acid past the teeth.
5. Use high concentration toothpaste such as Colgate Duraphat 2800 toothpaste as directed.