

Sugary Drinks Can Hurt Your Smile



How can sugary drinks hurt my smile?

If you drink sugary drinks, it can lead to serious health problems like obesity and type 2 diabetes. But these drinks can also hurt your smile. Drinks that have sugar can cause oral health problems like gum disease, tooth decay (cavities), and even bad breath. You can avoid these problems by making good drink choices.

Which drinks are good for my smile and which ones are not?

THESE DRINKS ARE GOOD FOR YOU. Choose these drinks. They have little or no sugar.

- Water (with fluoride)
- Unsweetened tea
- Low-fat (skim or 1%) milk
- Diluted (add water) juice
- Low sugar vegetable juice

LIMIT OR AVOID THESE DRINKS. They can cause problems with your teeth and mouth because they have lots of sugar.

- Regular cokes or pop (the diet ones have less sugar or no sugar)
- Energy and sports drinks (Unless they are sugar-free)
- Chocolate milk
- Smoothies
- Fruit punch
- Juice
- Sweetened waters
- Coffee and tea with added sugars



What should I do if I cannot give up all my sugary drinks?

- Try to cut back to 2 sugary drinks per week and try drinking smaller amounts.
- Do not drink sugary drinks between meals. If you must have one, have it with your meal.
- Use a straw. This way, the sugar has less contact with your teeth.
- Drink your sugary drink quickly. If you sip on it slowly, this gives the bacteria more time to create tooth decay.

What other important things can I do to protect my smile?

Besides making good drinking choices, you can:

- Brush your teeth 2 times each day.
- Floss (clean between your teeth) 1 time each day.
- Visit your dentist 2 times each year (every 6 months).



How can I help keep my child's teeth healthy?

You can help your child make healthy decisions about what they choose to drink. Here are some ways you can help:

- Do not let your baby or toddler have bottles or sippy cups with sugary drinks.
- Offer your child water or milk first.
- If your child does not like water, let them try water with fresh fruit slices like lemon or lime.
- Be a role model by drinking healthy drinks yourself.



SUMMARY

Sugary drinks are bad for your health and your smile. Choose water or milk instead, and help your child(ren) do the same.



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