

HEALTHY SMILE

Happy Body

BY GRANT ZELLNER

The healthy human body is an incredible concert of systems that operate in perfect harmony. Usually, when one system suffers disease or poor health, the other parts of our bodies suffer as well.

The relationship between dental health and overall wellness is no exception. Diabetes, heart disease and other conditions have well-documented connections to dental health. An unhealthy oral environment can be a gateway for bacteria and disease to enter the body. And a weakened, compromised circulatory or immune system can compromise good tooth and gum health. Everything is related in terms of your overall health. So, when it comes to diet, it's safe to assume that what's right for the body is right for the teeth—and vice versa.

For many of us, our earliest memories of health and dental care include lectures about the dangers of fatty or sugary snacks and the redemptive powers of twice-daily brushing. And like most of our simplest, early life lessons, these guidelines remain valid throughout life.

But there is nothing wrong with wondering why. For instance, why is sugar so harmful?

DENTAL HEALTH: HARMFUL & HELPFUL FOODS

Dr. Christine Hopkins explained that it is not sugar acting alone that causes damage. Rather, it is the presence of certain bacteria that interact with the sugars—even “good” sugars such as those found in fresh fruit—to produce enamel-eating acid.

“Anything that causes acid is bad,” said Dr. Hopkins. “Soda, juice, citrus fruit and other sweet foods leave remnants of sugar, creating an environment the bacteria love. Bacteria and acids work their way into teeth and under restorations such as crowns and bridges, eating away enamel first, then the dentin of the teeth.”

You may be asking yourself, “How can food become my ally and not my enemy in this battle?” since even good-for-you foods contain some sugars.

“Actually, cheese is very good for neutralizing bacteria,” said Dr. Hopkins.

A healthy snack of cheese, plus veggies or crackers and water or milk to drink, will leave less sugar behind in your mouth while being healthier for your body. Also, eating at regular intervals rather than grazing all day can encourage a healthier overall caloric intake, as well as a better environment for your teeth and gums.



Before your next snack...

*Check out these
tooth-friendly food tips!*

- Carrots, celery and apples can help remove plaque. Enjoy these snacks between brushing!
- Drinking water, instead of juice or soda, cleanses the mouth and allows your mouth to naturally redeposit essential minerals into your teeth.
- Vitamin A aids in the formation of tooth enamel. So, enjoy pumpkin, carrots, sweet potatoes and broccoli.
- Cheese lowers the acidity of your mouth, making it less inhabitable by cavity-causing bacteria.
- Green Tea inhibits the growth of bacteria that cause bad breath.

*Remember to take your vitamins!
Calcium and vitamins C and D promote
healthy teeth and gums.*



**“DR. HOPKINS’
CARE IS
EXTRAORDINARY
AND MY NEW
SMILE IS LIKE A
MIRACLE!”**

**BILL E.,
ACTUAL PATIENT**



BEFORE



AFTER

DENTAL HEALTH & YOUR DIET

At Advanced Dental Center, Dr. Hopkins, a prosthodontist, sees patients of all ages, some with very severe dental concerns. She said a striking number of people are unable to enjoy a healthy, balanced diet because of advanced disease or injuries that cause pain and tooth loss.

“Without fully functional teeth, a person can’t eat nutritious food and can’t get enough nutrients in their diet,” added Dr. Hopkins. “Proteins, grains and long-strand vegetables usually go first.”


People who are unable to enjoy food incur weight loss, frailty, diminished strength in their body and their jaw and a loss of oral supportive structures. Unfortunately, many older adults believe dental problems and the impact those problems have on diet and quality of life are just a natural part of aging.

“Patients have the idea that when you get old, you lose teeth. This does not have to be so!” exclaimed Dr. Hopkins. “Great teeth, a healthy diet and exercise can all be a part of life, throughout your life.”

Patients who visit Dr. Hopkins sometimes need extensive restorations—including crowns, bridges, dentures and dental implants. With a complete and healthy set of teeth, these same patients experience improved diet, increased stamina and a more active lifestyle. Many begin exercising again, become more social or take up traveling.

Despite the technological advances in dentistry that make dramatic healing possible, Dr. Hopkins asserted that it’s always better to protect your teeth now.

“Take care of your teeth in the present, so that when you are in your seventies, eighties or beyond, you will have kept your natural, beautiful teeth for a lifetime!”

Advanced Dental Center and Dr. Christine Hopkins are located in Plano, Texas. If you have any questions about your dental health and wellness, or if you are interested in state-of-the-art cosmetic or restorative dentistry, contact Dr. Hopkins at **972-781-0209**. 

Advanced Dental Center

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