

**Every time you eat or drink something containing sugar, your teeth decay for approximately 45 minutes. The frequency and amount of sugary foods and drinks should be reduced and restricted to mealtimes.**

Most sugars in the diet are in processed foods and drinks:

- sugar & chocolate confectionary
- cakes, biscuits, buns, fruit pies, pastries
- puddings, fruit yoghurts, ice cream
- table sugar
- sugared breakfast cereals
- fruit in syrup
- fresh fruit juice and smoothies
- any fizzy drinks
- sugared milk drinks, milkshakes, cocoa
- sugar containing alcoholic drinks
- dried fruits e.g. raisins, apricots
- syrups and sauces

**Watch out for hidden sugars** found in foods for example: • ketchup • mayonnaise • flavoured crisps • baked beans

**Look at the ingredients list on foods, anything ending in -OSE means sugar. e.g. maltose, glucose, sucrose, fructose etc.**

Particularly watch out for sugar in antacid tablets, cough/throat sweets, breath mints and any sweets that dissolve slowly in the mouth. These can be particularly damaging.

Fizzy drinks, fruit squashes (including those that say 'no added sugar'), fruit juice and smoothies will all cause decay and acid erosion. Try to only have these drinks at a meal. Drink tap water or tea/coffee without sugar in between meals.

Fresh fruit should be eaten at meal times ideally. Some fruits such as bananas cause a lot of decay and citrus fruits can cause decay and acid erosion of the teeth.

It is important to eat 5 portions of fruit or vegetables every day.

Too much sugar is also bad for your general health as well as your teeth. Too much sugar can lead to obesity, diabetes and some cancers.

### **Top Tips**

- Don't snack in between meals.
- If you have to snack the best foods are savoury such as: raw carrots, cucumber, celery and peppers, chunk of cheese, plain cheese biscuit such as oat cakes, bread sticks, rice cakes, plain crisps, crumpets, pitta bread.
- Drink plain tap water or tea/coffee without sugar in between meals.
- Don't eat sugary foods within an hour of bedtime.
- Chewing sugar free gum for 1-2 minutes after eating helps to increase the salivary flow which helps the teeth to repair themselves.

Xylitol is a good sugar substitute