

Tooth TALK

“Hey Doc, I can feel the “holes” in my teeth and they are sensitive! What should I do? (Enamel Erosion-Part 1)”

Enamel, which is the hardest substance in the body, serves as the outermost, protective layer of teeth against bacteria which causes cavities. It is also the “pearly” white part of teeth in a vibrant, attractive smile.

Enamel is made of carbonated calcium hydroxyapatite, with a pH of 5.5. Our saliva helps keep the enamel of our teeth nice and strong by “neutralizing” any acid in the mouth, maintaining the pH balance for enamel, and replacing phosphate and calcium ions that are lost from the enamel.

When enamel wears or “erodes” away, there is no turning back of the damage to the enamel. Since there is no live cells in enamel, it cannot regenerate or heal itself. As enamel erosion continues, the live, sensitive nerve tissue in the center of the teeth becomes exposed, causing hot and cold teeth sensitivity. Also the teeth become more yellow as the inner layer of the teeth, dentin, becomes more visible.



Some of the common causes of enamel erosion are:

- **Ageing** - We use our teeth for eating, drinking, chewing everyday. It is inevitable that enamel erodes away over time. Enamel erosion is a natural part of aging.
- **Diet** - Citrus food/beverages such as oranges, pineapple, lemons, are very acidic. Excessive consumption of citrus food/beverages can erode the enamel away by altering the pH level of saliva. Sodas such as Coke, sports drinks etc, are damaging to enamel too. Not only are sodas acidic, but also they contain lots of sugar which serves as food source to the bacteria in the mouth. These bacteria releases acid as a by-product which causes cavities and further erodes the enamel away. Coffee and wine are acidic beverages and too much coffee and wine drinking will lead to enamel erosion.
- **Dry mouth** - People with dry mouth, often a side-effect of the medications they are taking, are more prone to enamel erosion because they lack the ample amount of saliva to protect the enamel.

In next month’s article, I shall continue the discussion on the topic of enamel erosion.



SCAN THE CODE BELOW TO VIEW OUR MOBILE SITE



OR VISIT WWW.DRVSUN.COM OR VISIT PHONE FOR OUR PROCEDURE LIST, SMILE GALLERY AND MORE!



ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS

4 Russell St. E., Lindsay
www.drvtorsun.com

705-324-0050