

Tooth Talk

"Hey Doc, which toothpaste should I use?" (Part 1- Introduction)

Nowadays, choosing the right toothpaste to use can be an overwhelming task! There is a whole variety of different types of toothpaste to choose from for the consumers.

Generally speaking, most toothpastes typically consist of the following ingredients:

- **Mild abrasives** - Their purpose is to remove debris and stain. Examples include calcium carbonate, magnesium carbonate, hydrated aluminium oxides, dehydrated silica gels, phosphate salts and silicates.
- **Humectants** - Their purpose is to prevent water loss in the toothpaste. Examples include glycerol, propylene glycol and sorbitol.
- **Flavouring agents** - They provide taste to the toothpaste and they do not promote tooth decay. Examples include saccharin and other sweeteners.
- **Thickening agents or Binders** - They stabilize the toothpaste formula and maintain proper texture. Examples include mineral colloids, natural gums, seaweed colloids or synthetic cellulose.
- **Detergents** - They create foaming action. Examples include Sodium Lauryl Sulfate(SLS), Sodium N-Lauryl Sarcosinate.
- **Fluoride** - All Canadian or American Dental Association approved toothpastes contain fluoride which protects and strengthens tooth enamel and remineralizes tooth decay.

In the next article, I will examine the more specific types of toothpaste consumers can use for their own specific needs.



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