



Texas Center of Dental Excellence

Neela R. Patel, DDS, PA

2525 North Loop West, Suite 230 Houston, TX 77008 PH: (281) 978-2927

Dr Neela Patel's Natural Tips to Prevent Cavities

Brush your teeth often: To keep those pearly whites healthy and strong, you should keep your teeth clean. If you're working in an office, there are travel toothbrushes and small tubes of fluoride toothpaste you can discreetly carry in your purse or briefcase. For school-aged kids, they should brush their teeth after they have their afternoon snack, just to clean their teeth after their busy day. As an alternative, you can swish with mouthwash or even water, just to rinse the remaining residue from your teeth until you can brush them thoroughly.

Floss before you brush: Flossing removes the bacteria and food particles between the teeth and from under the gum line. Plaque is a biofilm that is sticky and slimy. It encases the bacteria and food particles. This biofilm will grow whether a person eats or not. To break up the biofilm, flossing is recommended before brushing. Also, unwaxed floss is recommended because it is more effective at breaking up the biofilm.

Eat Cheese: Yes, you read that right. Cheese has a protein called casein which researchers have discovered can help promote healthy teeth. Cheese also neutralizes any acids that we eat and drink to help prevent the destruction of enamel. Surprisingly, wine (acidic) and cheese is a winning combination. Tasty...very! Cavity prevention...Yes! This seems to be the case when it comes to cheese.

Sip with Straws: People love their soft drinks. Limit the amount of damage your drinks can do by using a straw. If the liquid doesn't come into direct contact with your teeth, you can minimize the adverse effects. Don't forget to rinse with water, because that sugar still lingers in your mouth. After having a soda, do not brush for 20 minutes because the acid can further damage the enamel.

Sugar-Free Gum: Chewing sugar-free gum made with Xylitol is a pretty useful cavity-defensive measure. Xylitol helps with cavity prevention because cavity-causing bacteria cannot grow in your mouth when Xylitol is on the loose. If you're chewing sugar-free gum or sucking on a sugar-free mint where Xylitol is the first ingredient, you're doing major damage control when it comes to your teeth.

Visit your dentist regularly: To really pack a cavity-preventing punch, schedule regular visits with the dentist. Doing this twice per year for cleaning and oral exams can help minimize potential problems. You can also discuss dental sealants with your dentist. Dental Sealants are a protective plastic coating that is placed in the grooves of your teeth and creates a barrier against any bacteria that can cause tooth decay. These sealants can last up to ten years but need to be examined at your regular check-ups to make sure they are still in place.