

## Newsletter

QUARTER 2 : 2016

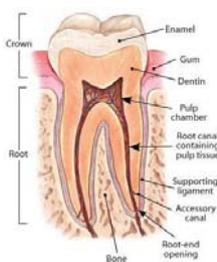
Welcome to our second newsletter for 2016.

This newsletter we will continue with our second instalment on the two dental diseases we treat most at Rosebud Dental Group discussing causes, treatment and prevention in easy to understand terms.

### DENTAL CARIES

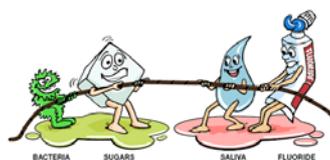
Dental Caries or tooth decay affects the actual structure of a tooth as opposed to periodontal disease which affects the supporting structures which we discussed last newsletter.

Teeth have three basic layers, an outer layer of enamel covering the part of the tooth above the gum line called the crown, the part that we can see. It is a strong layer made of crystals. Below this layer is the dentine which is still quite hard but not as hard as enamel which also has tubules running through it filled with fluid connected to the nerve and blood vessels of the tooth. The innermost part is a hollow space that contains the nerves and blood vessels that supply the tooth.



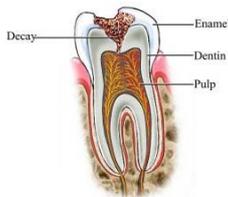
### How tooth decay develops

Bacteria in the mouth is found in a sticky film on tooth surfaces called PLAQUE. When you consume food and drink high in carbohydrates, the bacteria in plaque convert the carbohydrates into the energy they need, producing acid in this process. It's the acid produced that breaks down the enamel surface of your teeth. The acid from the



plaque softens the enamel by removing minerals from the tooth. Over time, a cavity develops, starting in the enamel. If detected early when still in enamel, decay is reversible (through the use of Toothmousse and high fluoride products). If not, decay will reach the den-

tine. Dentine is softer than enamel, and the process of decay speeds up. Without treatment, bacteria will progress through dentine into the pulp, your nerves will be exposed to bacteria, resulting in a toothache.



There are a number of factors that can increase your risk of tooth decay. These include:

**Diet:** Eating food and drink high in carbohydrates, particularly snacking regularly between meals, will increase your risk of tooth decay. Please note it's not the quantity of sugar but the **FREQUENCY** of sugar exposure that increases decay risk.



Tooth decay is often associated with sweet and sticky food and drink – such as chocolate, sweets, sugar, fizzy drinks and sports drinks. Starchy foods such as chips, white bread, and biscuits also contain high levels of carbohydrates.

**Poor oral hygiene:** Not brushing and flossing your teeth regularly and not seeing a dentist for regular checkups and cleans increases your risk of tooth decay because of plaque build up. You should brush your teeth at least twice a day using fluoride toothpaste.

**Not getting enough fluoride:** Fluoride helps prevent tooth decay by making teeth more resistant to acids produced by plaque.

**Not having enough saliva.** Saliva washes away food and harmful sugars, so it helps protect your teeth from decay. A dry mouth may be caused by conditions such as Sjögren's syndrome and by taking certain medicines. Older adults are more likely to have a dry mouth. Ask our dentists about the products that may help.

### Preventing tooth decay

**Diet:** Limiting the amount of sugar you

eat and drink is important to prevent tooth decay and also has wider benefits for your general health. Have sugary food and drink only at mealtimes and don't eat sugary snacks between meals. Healthier alternatives for snacks and drinks include cheese, fruit and vegetables, and unsweetened tea or coffee. Some artificial sweeteners have been shown not to contribute to tooth decay, so they may be a good alternative if you like to add sugar to any foods or drinks. Chewing sugar-free gum after you have eaten may also help prevent tooth decay. When you chew gum, your mouth produces saliva, which neutralises the acid in your mouth

**Brushing & Flossing:** Brush your teeth at least twice a day. Don't brush your teeth straight after a meal as it can damage your teeth, especially if you've had fruit, fizzy drinks, wine or any other food that contains acid. Leaving it an hour will give your saliva a chance to neutralise the acid. Flossing is an important part of oral hygiene. It removes plaque and food particles from between your teeth and under the gum line, where a toothbrush cannot always reach.



You can use interdental brushes instead of flossing. For brushing and flossing techniques, have a chat to one of our friendly dentists.

### Online Bookings

Some appointments may now be booked via our website and Facebook page as well as by phone. This QR Code will soon be available on our appointment cards for those wishing to quickly access this facility. Please note however that more appointment options are available by making a phone call to discuss your needs with our reception team.

