

Did you know that good nutrition not only helps your waistline, but it also plays an important role in your oral health? In fact, nutrients such as Folate, Zinc and vitamin C are integral in maintaining your oral health and deficiencies from your diet can show up in your mouth.

Your diet can affect teeth, bone strength and overall gum health. A good diet can aid in the prevention, and even help in the management of gum disease and cavities. On the other hand, poor diet and nutritional intake can become a risk factor for developing a chronic condition like Diabetes, Heart Disease or obesity, as well as increasing the likelihood for developing or worsening of oral health issues¹.

In order to eat well, we all need to have healthy teeth and gums. Since oral health diseases are almost 100% preventable and can be costly to treat once they have occurred, here are a few recommendations to maximize your oral and overall health through a preventive-focused diet:

- ✓ **Choose whole foods:** Whole foods like green apples, carrots, spinach, nuts, even avocados and plain yogurt are great sources of nutrients such as calcium, magnesium, vitamin K, D, and C. Not a regular consumer of fruits and vegetables? Try juicing or blending (in a smoothie?) to get a good daily dose of both!
- ✓ **Reduce the sugar:** Limit the amount of processed foods and those high in sugars such as candies, soft drinks, chips, cakes and other refined breads. These types of foods encourage a cavity-promoting environment and encourage overall inflammation-including in the gums.
- ✓ **Eat the right kinds of protein:** Lean protein such as eggs, chicken, fish and leaner cuts of red meat (such as...)
- ✓ **Drink plenty of water:** Tap water and many bottled water varieties have fluoride, which is great for preventing cavities. For a different twist, try infusing with real pieces of fruit for added flavor.
- ✓ **Add Green Tea:** Green Tea is known to reduce bad breath, help digestion and reduce inflammation and cavity-causing bacteria².

Making proper food choices not only lessens your risk for health issues, but it is another tool in keeping your mouth healthy for a lifetime. Now that's something to smile about!

Want more health tips? Please visit our [Dental Health Center](#). While you are there, check out our [Find-A-Dentist Tool](#) to find an in-network dentist near you!

¹ [Oral Health; Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion; 2018](#)

²Green tea: a boon for periodontal and general health;Journal of Indian Society of Periodontology; April – June 2012