

FOCUS

ON DENTAL HYGIENE

THE SWEET TRUTH ABOUT XYLITOL

Dental decay (cavities) remains a significant childhood disease affecting nearly 20 percent of children between the ages of two to four. By age 17, nearly 80 percent of young adults have had a cavity and over two-thirds of adults age 35 to 44 have lost at least one permanent tooth due to dental decay. Dental decay has been shown to be an infectious transmissible disease, resulting in damage to the enamel by acid-forming bacteria found in plaque, biofilm (bacteria) and in the presence of sugar.

The good news is as we educate, increase access to care and explore home care products and protocols that encourage the removal of this harmful bacteria, we will continue to make progress in ending the “silent epidemic” of dental disease. One such area that is gaining increased attention by dental professionals is incorporating the use of xylitol-based products in a daily home care regimen.

5 ways xylitol improves your dental health

1. Xylitol reduces the risk of cavities

Cavities are typically formed when there is a highly acidic environment in the mouth. This can occur through many different means, including eating and/or drinking acidic beverages and foods (mostly sweets) and fermentable carbohydrates (breads, pasta); using products that are high in alcohol content, contain sugar or are acidic in nature; or simply by failing to remove the bacteria which thrives in this environment. The presence of xylitol has an effect on this acidic environment by bringing the pH to a safe and neutral level, thereby reducing the risk of decay. In fact, studies have clearly demonstrated that regular use of xylitol in dental products can reduce tooth decay by up to 80 percent.

2. Xylitol keeps your mouth moist and healthy

Xylitol actually encourages healthy salivary flow, which is instrumental in washing away food particles. This not only aids in keeping the mouth cleaner, it promotes longer-lasting fresh breath by bathing your teeth and tissues. Increasing salivary production is especially important for people

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suffering with dry mouth, which can be caused from aging, illness, cancer treatment and medications.

3. Xylitol repairs enamel

Xylitol can actually help build stronger, healthier teeth by restoring essential minerals to the tooth structure. With a healthy neutral pH and salivary flow, calcium and phosphate ions are freely delivered to the enamel — including areas of weakened enamel. These minerals support the tooth in repair and remineralization. In fact, research has shown a reversal of early stages of damage to the enamel with a prolonged use of xylitol.

4. Xylitol has fewer calories ... how sweet it is

Xylitol has 40 percent fewer calories than sugar and all the great taste. That makes xylitol a great alternative for anyone dieting, watching their caloric intake or who simply prefers a healthy alternative to sugar. Xylitol is also an ideal sugar substitute for those with diabetes due to its low Glycemic Index—making it ideal for maintaining steady levels of insulin and blood sugar.

5. Xylitol is a safe and unique alternative to fluoride

Xylitol is naturally occurring and found in many fruits and vegetables including berries and mushrooms. Xylitol has been used in Europe as a popular sugar substitute since the 1970s and has been approved for use in over 35 countries. Due to the controversial attention fluoride has received over the years there are those who prefer an alternative in their home care products. Xylitol has given us that option.

Closing Thoughts

As studies continue to pour in supporting the efficacy, health benefits and unsurpassed safety record of xylitol, Oxyfresh is proud to be a pioneer in the formulation of professional-grade dental products that contain the increasingly popular natural sweetener. Oxyfresh is the only proven breath management system to offer xylitol in a customizable, long-term periodontal management homecare program that also supports cosmetic dentistry, while providing effective relief for dry mouth sufferers. No other dental company offers this much versatility PLUS the oral health benefits of xylitol!

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