



# The Hub Dental Practice



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## PREVENTION OF DENTAL DECAY IN HIGH RISK ADULTS AND CHILDREN

There are 4 main ways to prevent decay in teeth

1. Plaque Control
2. Sugar control
3. Fluoride
4. Disinfection and Sealing of the Teeth

### Why do small Sticky Spots on the teeth become Big Holes?

Decay happens when sugars in food and drinks react with the bacteria in plaque, forming acids. Every time you eat or drink anything containing sugars, these acids attack the teeth and start to soften and dissolve the enamel.

The attacks can last an hour after eating or drinking, before the natural salts in your saliva cause the enamel to 'remineralise' and harden again.

It's not just sugars that are harmful: other types of carbohydrate foods and drinks react with plaque and form acids.

These are the 'fermentable' carbohydrates such as the 'hidden sugars' in processed food, natural sugars like those in fruit, and cooked starches.

Snacking between meals on sugary or acidic foods and drinks can increase the risk of decay, as the teeth come under constant attack and do not have time to recover.

It is therefore important not to keep snacking on sugary foods or sipping sugary drinks throughout the day.



Severely decayed tooth

### What happens if I don't get it Treated Early?

Toothache is a sign that you should visit a dentist straight away, as it is a warning that something is wrong.

If you don't do anything, this will usually make matters worse and you may lose a tooth that could otherwise have been saved.

### What can I do to Prevent Decay?

The best way to prevent dental decay is by brushing your teeth thoroughly twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, making sure that you brush the inner, outer and biting surfaces of your teeth. Children up to three years old should use a toothpaste with a fluoride level of at least 1000ppm (parts per million).

Three-year-olds to adults should use a toothpaste that contains 1350ppm to 1500ppm of fluoride.

Using 'interdental' brushes, or dental floss or tape also helps remove plaque and food from between your teeth and where they meet the gums. These are areas an ordinary toothbrush can't reach.

### Are Adult Fluoride Treatments Necessary?

Everyday, your body takes in fluoride and loses fluoride. The way you take in fluoride is through foods you eat and drink. The way you lose fluoride is through demineralization of your teeth when acids caused by plaque bacteria and sugars in your mouth attack tooth enamel. You can "put fluoride back" (as well as calcium and phosphate) into your tooth's enamel layer by eating healthy foods and drinking fluoridated water. Another way to get more fluoride is through fluoride treatments at our practice. Basically if you lose fluoride faster than you take it in, you are at risk of tooth decay.

## How does an adult fluoride treatment from my dentist help me?

Fluoride helps prevent tooth decay by defending your teeth against acid attacks caused by plaque bacteria and sugars in your mouth. Amazingly, it can also reverse early tooth decay. For kids younger than 6 years, fluoride is part of the development of permanent teeth, making it difficult for acids to dematerialize the teeth.

But we now know that adults can also benefit from added fluoride. Fluoride disrupts acid production in the teeth of adults, as well as children.

In addition to fluoride in foods and water, fluoride can be directly applied to the teeth through fluoridated toothpastes and mouth rinses. You can find some of these products containing fluoride in lower strengths in supermarkets. Stronger concentrations require a dentist's prescription or you can get here at our practice. At Cambridge Dental Hub, we offer high-fluoride toothpaste called Colgate Duraphat. We also offer fluoride treatments for both children and adults.

## In What Forms Is Fluoride Available at the Practice?

Your dentist can apply fluoride to the teeth as a gel or varnish. These treatments contain a much higher level of fluoride than the amount found in toothpastes and mouth rinses. Varnishes are painted on the teeth, and this is what we recommend. When you have a fluoride varnish, you can eat or drink immediately.

## Do Adults Really Need Extra Fluoride?

We're very used to our dentist talking about getting enough fluoride when teeth are developing in infants and children. But adults benefit from fluoride, too. New research shows that topical fluoride -- from toothpastes, mouth rinses, and fluoride treatments -- are as important in fighting tooth decay as in strengthening developing teeth.



## Certain Conditions Put Adults at Risk for Fluoride Loss

Some people have certain conditions that put them at increased risk of tooth decay, and so they will benefit from additional fluoride treatments. Here are some examples:

### Dry mouth conditions caused by diseases or medications.

The lack of saliva makes it harder for food particles to be washed away and acids to be neutralized, putting your teeth at risk of demineralization.

### Gum recession and gum disease

These conditions can expose more of your tooth and tooth roots to bacteria increasing the chance of tooth decay.

### History of frequent cavities:

If you have one cavity every year or every other year, you may benefit from additional fluoride.

### Dental work present in the mouth

Crowns, bridges or braces are examples. Some dental treatments put teeth at risk for decay at the point where the crown meets the underlying tooth structure or around the brackets of orthodontic appliances.

### Patients who are frequent snackers

If you eat sugary foods, or have a family history of cavities are at an increased risk of tooth decay.

### Patients who have deep pits and grooves

These areas in the teeth are prone to dental decay.

## We offer fluoride Treatment.

It involves the application of concentrated fluoride to the exposed areas of the tooth; it requires no injection or drilling and is completely painless.

