

# Diet Advice Sheet

for good tooth health

A tooth looks solid enough but in actual fact at any one time, some minerals are coming out of the tooth in to the saliva and some minerals come from your saliva and go back in to the tooth. There is a constant movement.



There are always millions of bacteria in your mouth even straight after brushing.

If you eat or drink anything with any sugar in it then those bacteria eat a tiny amount of the sugar. After using the sugar they release acid

When there is acid next to a tooth **MORE** minerals come **OUT** of the tooth than go back in. This overall loss of minerals is **DECAY**.



Your saliva will wash away this acid but it takes about an hour.

When all the acid is gone **MORE** minerals go **IN** to the tooth than come out so the tooth can **REPAIR**.

Most food (savory or sweet) has hidden sugars. Even things like bread, crackers and crisps are broken down by enzymes in the saliva to produce sugar.



## What All This Means

Every time you eat you are likely to have an hour of decay:

- ★ If you had a bowl of breakfast cereal you will have an hour of decay
- ★ If you had 8 chocolate bars you would have an hour of decay
- ★ If you had plain toast, you would have an hour's decay
- ★ If you just had a coffee with a tiny bit of sugar or honey in it that's an hour of decay

So, whatever you eat you are going to have **an hour of decay**.



## So, What Can I Do?

**BUT** if you then had nothing to eat until lunch time, that leaves a few hours after your meal where minerals can go back **IN** and repair the tooth.

Lunch time comes and whatever you eat will cause an hour of decay.

**BUT** if you don't snack or drink sugary drinks between meals then the decay will heal again as before.

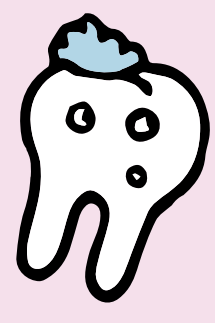
You can still actually eat sweets if you want to, just have them at mealtimes.



### Example 1:

If you have a piece of toast at breakfast and a black coffee, no sugar you still have an hour of decay because of the toast. If later you have a juice that's another hour, then later a small energy bar or yoghurt, that's another hour.

Next its lunch so that's another hour with no time for the teeth to heal. What might appear to be healthy snacking will cause decay.



### Example 2:

If you had cereal with loads of sugar on it for breakfast, a doughnut for lunch and a big slice of chocolate cake for dinner.

As long as you didn't eat or drink anything between meals you probably won't get decay. You may get scurvy though if this became a habit, and all your teeth may fall out instead but they won't have holes in!

