



Chew on This!

Oral Health Choices for Teens

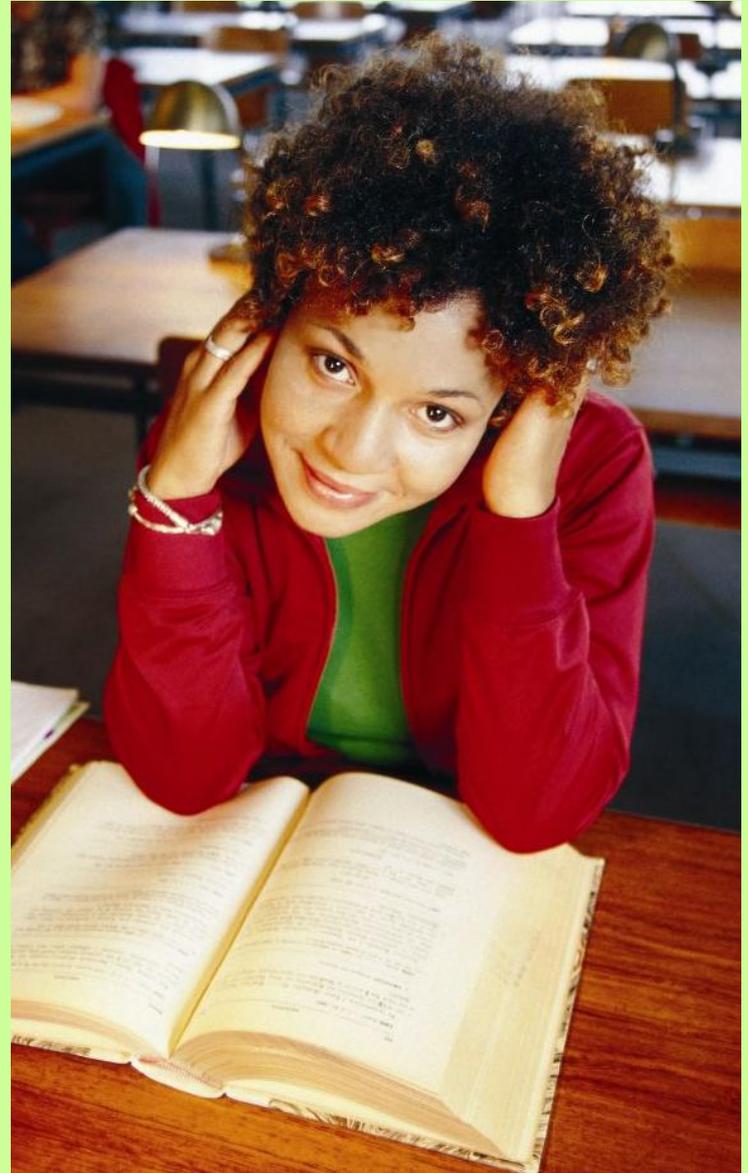
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Being a teenager can be a challenge.

On your way to becoming an adult, you're taking on new responsibilities all the time.

One of these is the responsibility to maintain your own health, including your oral health.

If you neglect your teeth, you risk gum disease and other problems, and your teeth could even fall out eventually.



If you want to have a healthy and good-looking smile your whole life, you've got to work to keep it that way. This presentation will show you lots of ways to do it, by discussing these subjects:

- Oral health basics
- Eating habits
- Bad breath
- Mouthguards
- Piercings
- Tobacco
- Drugs
- Braces
- Wisdom teeth
- Tooth whitening

Let's get started!



Oral Health Basics

The number one enemy of your teeth is plaque. This is a sticky, colorless substance that forms on teeth, especially near the gums.

Bacteria that live in plaque produce harmful acids that attack tooth enamel and stay in your mouth for up to 20 minutes after you eat.

The more you can get rid of these acids and the plaque itself, the fewer cavities you are likely to get.



Oral Health Basics

The best ways to get rid of plaque and harmful acids are the Big Three of oral health care:

- Thoroughly brush your teeth twice a day
- Floss every day
- Visit your dentist regularly for checkups



Oral Health Basics



If this stuff is old news to you, then good!

Hopefully it means you are already making the Big Three part of your life.

And if you're not, now is a crucial time to start, before permanent damage to your teeth and gums happens.

Believe it or not, periodontal (gum) disease is an even greater cause of tooth loss than cavities!

Oral Health Basics

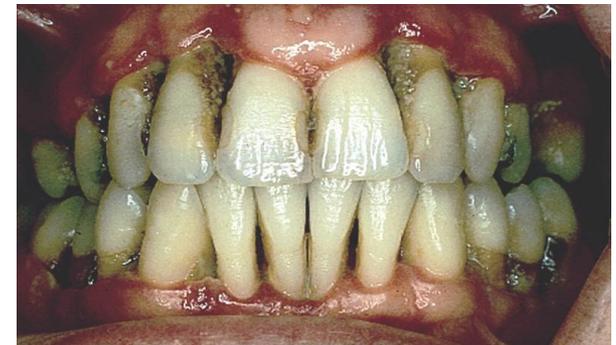
- 1) Healthy gums resulting from proper oral care.
- 2) Gingivitis. The bacteria in plaque irritates gums, causing redness. If you think this isn't very noticeable, you're right - small changes are warning signs of more severe disease that can follow.
- 3) Advanced Periodontitis. The more advanced the disease, the harder it is to reverse the damage and prevent eventual tooth loss.



Healthy gums



Gingivitis



Advanced Periodontitis

Be sure to use oral care products with the ADA Seal of Acceptance. This shows they're safe and effective.

If you haven't gotten tips from your dentist lately on brushing or flossing techniques, make an appointment soon.

Your dentist can advise you how often you need to visit.



Eating Habits

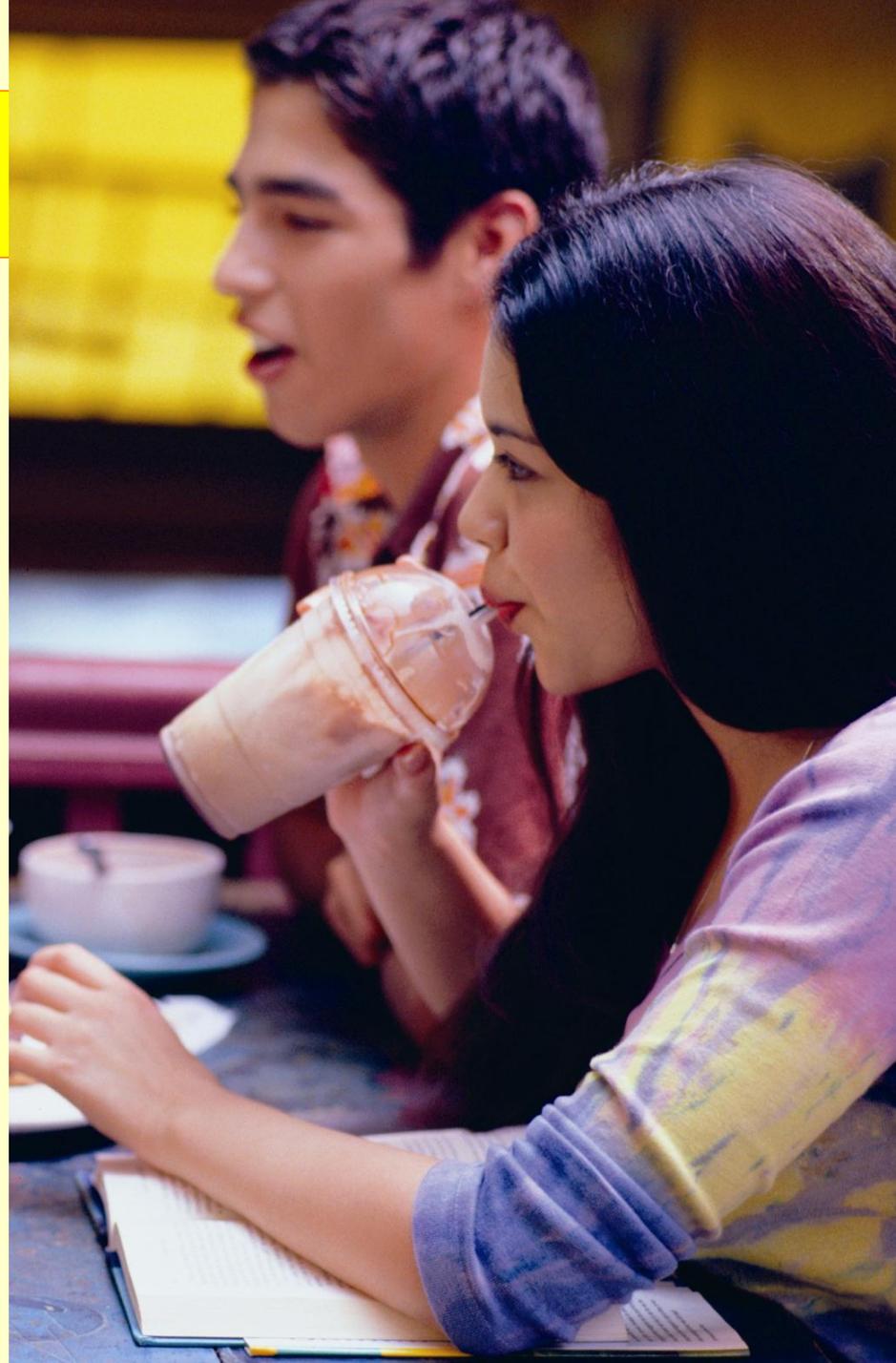
You've probably known since you were a kid that sugar can give you cavities, but did you know that other foods can too? Here's how certain foods can hurt your teeth, and how you can prevent them from hurting yours.



Eating Habits

In addition to sugary foods and drinks, starchy foods such as bread, cereal or chips can speed plaque formation.

Constant sipping on a soft drink or munching on snacks throughout the day increases the amount of time your teeth are exposed to harmful acids. This puts you at risk for tooth decay.

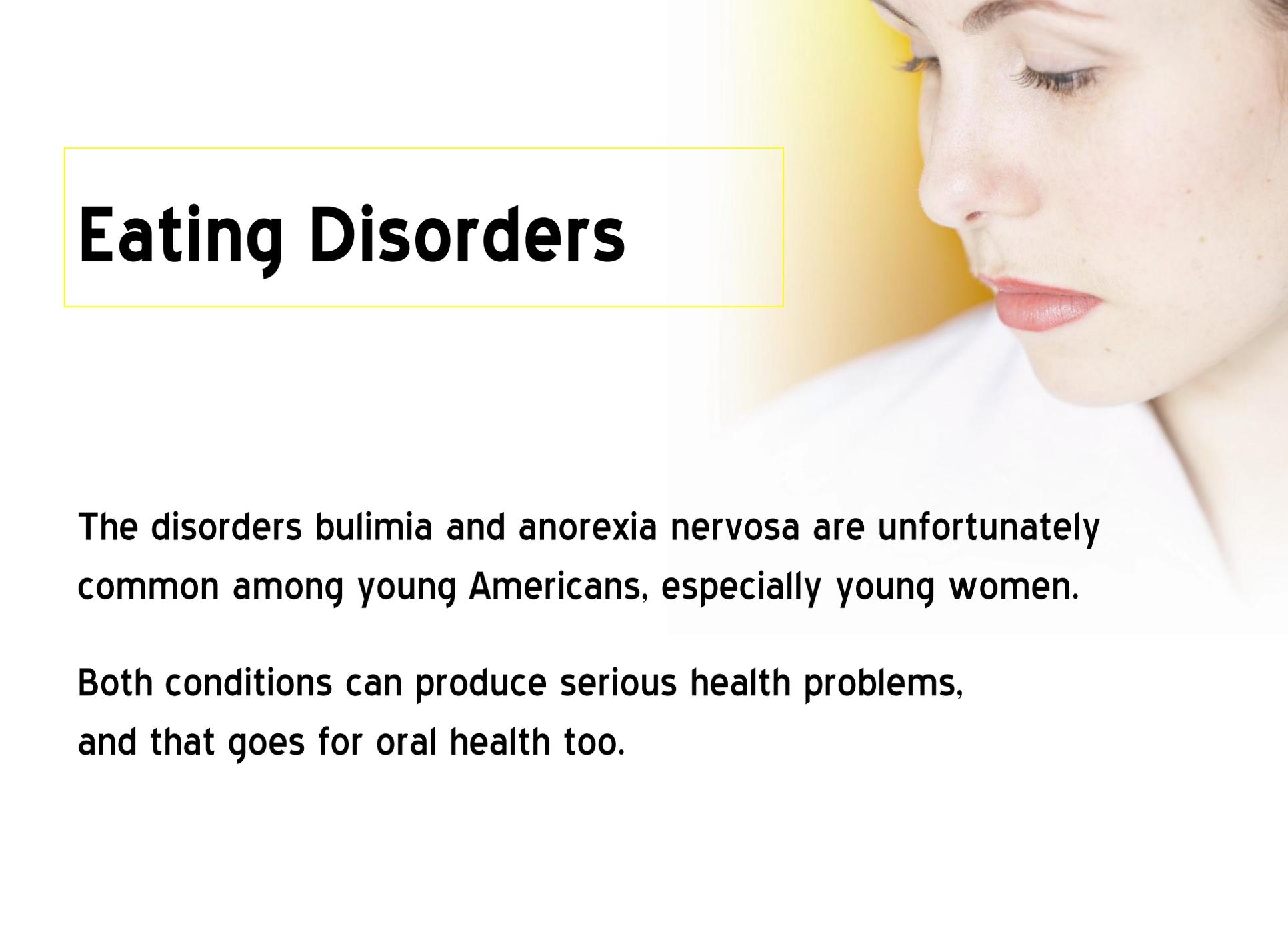


Eating Habits

You can reduce your risk of tooth decay by changing your eating habits in the following ways:

- Limit between-meal snacks.
- If you do snack, chew sugarless gum afterward, which helps rinse away harmful acids.
- Drink more water. Consuming fluoridated water can help prevent tooth decay.
- Eat nutritious and well-balanced meals from the five main food groups.





Eating Disorders

The disorders bulimia and anorexia nervosa are unfortunately common among young Americans, especially young women.

Both conditions can produce serious health problems, and that goes for oral health too.

Eating Disorders

Bulimia (“binge-and-purge” eating)

- Binging by eating large amounts of food quickly, often in secret
- Purging through self-induced vomiting, use of laxatives, fasting, diuretics or diet pills

Resulting oral health problems:

- Vomiting brings strong stomach acids in contact with teeth
- Tooth enamel erodes, and teeth eventually become worn and translucent
- Bad breath can result
- Mouth, throat and salivary glands can become swollen and tender

Eating Disorders

Anorexia (self-induced starvation)

- Intense fear of weight gain
- Inability to maintain a minimum weight for height and age

Resulting oral health problems:

- Person does not receive enough nutrients needed for good health, robbing the body of fuel
- Causes potential injury to teeth, muscles and major organs

Eating disorders can be complicated and difficult to sort out alone. If you have questions or concerns about your diet or eating habits, talk to your physician.



Bad Breath

Nobody likes to think they have bad breath.

It's embarrassing!

But, almost everyone has bad breath sometimes.

And the good news is that you can usually do something about it.

Here are some common causes:

Causes of Bad Breath: Food and Dieting

Cause	What to Do
Food that collects between teeth, around the gums and on the tongue can leave an unpleasant odor	Brush and floss daily, also brushing your tongue
Garlic, onions and certain other foods which contain odor-causing compounds that enter the bloodstream and are exhaled through the lungs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wait until the body has eliminated the compounds, usually within a day or so• Keep a log of what you eat to see which foods are making your breath smelly
Dieting, when the body breaks down reserves of fat and protein for energy, releasing organic substances called ketones in the breath	Brush and floss daily, and use an oral rinse if necessary

Causes of Bad Breath: Tobacco

Cause	What to do
Chewing tobacco or smoking cigarettes, cigars, or pipes	Don't smoke or chew!



Causes of Bad Breath: Dry Mouth

Cause	What to do
Certain medications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use a saliva substitute (available at pharmacies)
Salivary gland problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase fluid intake• Suck on sugarless candy
Continuous breathing through mouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use a fluoride-containing rinse• Tell your dentist you are experiencing dry mouth; he or she may apply a topical fluoride to reduce the risk of decay
Drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamines, LSD, heroin, amphetamines, and ecstasy	

Causes of Bad Breath: Disease

Cause	What to do
Periodontal (gum) disease	Treat the underlying cause with guidance from your dentist or physician
Respiratory infection or other medical conditions	

Tips for Preventing Bad Breath

- Have regular dental visits for good overall oral health
- Avoid hard candies with sugar
- Don't smoke or chew tobacco
- Give your dentist a list of any medications you take and let him or her know if you've had surgery or an illness
- Use products with the ADA Seal of Acceptance
- Brush and floss every day
- See your dentist for help when needed



Guard Your Mouth!

If you participate in any type of active sport, there's a risk of injury to your mouth as well as to your body.

A properly fitted mouthguard is an important piece of athletic gear that can help protect your smile.



Not Just for Football...



The American Dental Association and the International Academy for Sports Dentistry also recommend mouthguards for use with non-contact sports such as bicycling, gymnastics, and skateboarding - any activity in which the mouth could be injured.

Benefits of Mouthguards

- Help cushion blows that might otherwise cause broken teeth and injuries to the lips, tongue, face or jaw
- May prevent or reduce the severity of concussions
- Reduce loss of playing time due to injury

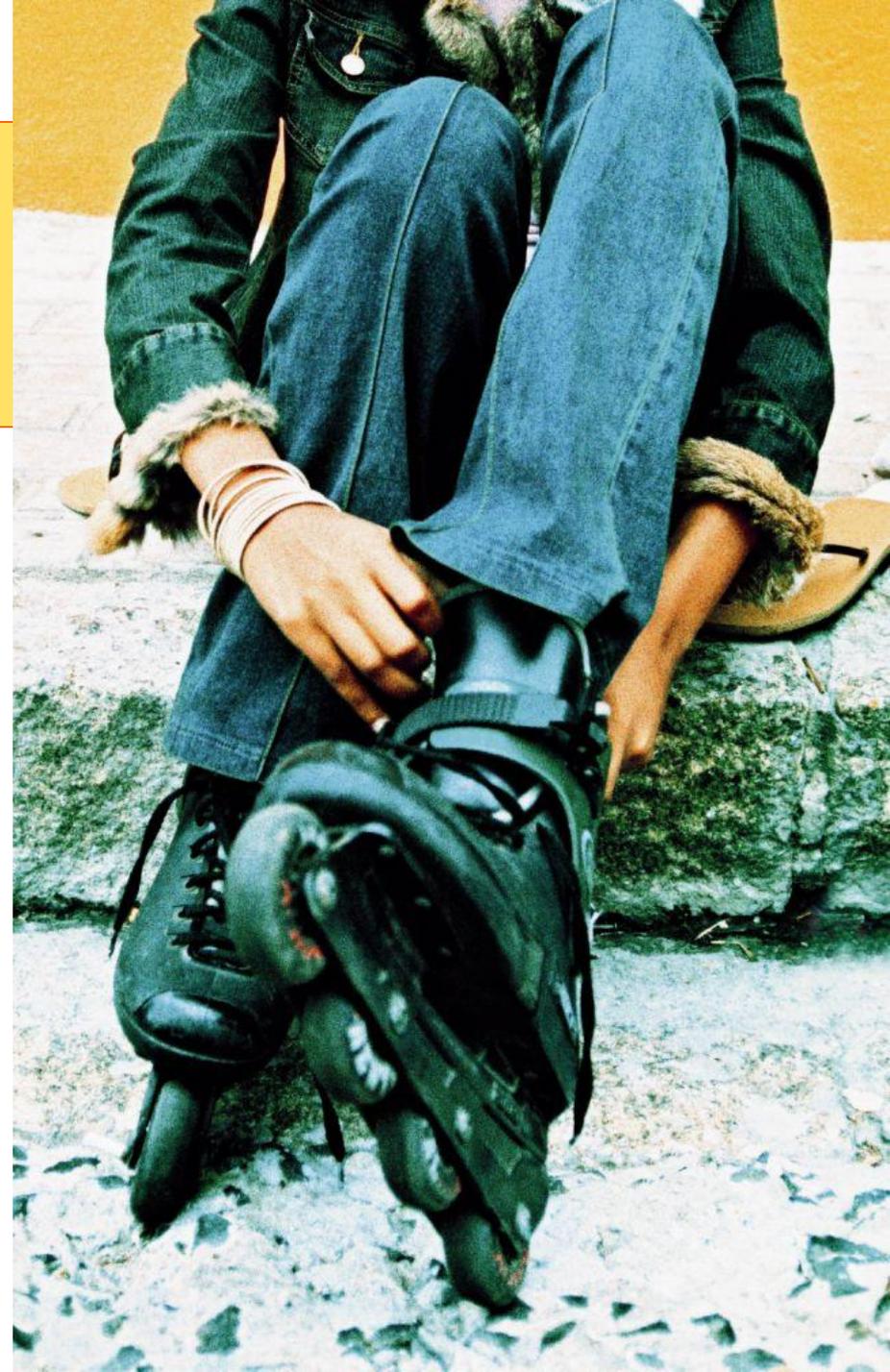


Since high schools and colleges started requiring that football players wear mouthguards and facemasks, about 200,000 mouth and face injuries have been prevented each year!

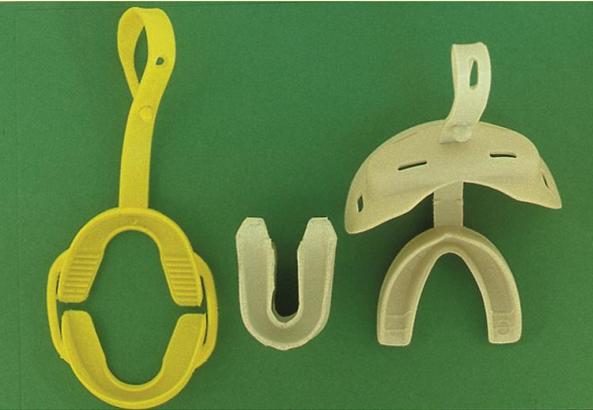
Choosing a Mouthguard

Pick a mouthguard that:

- Is resilient and tear resistant
- Fits properly and is comfortable
- Is easy to clean
- Doesn't restrict speech or breathing



Types of Mouthguards



The Stock Mouthguard

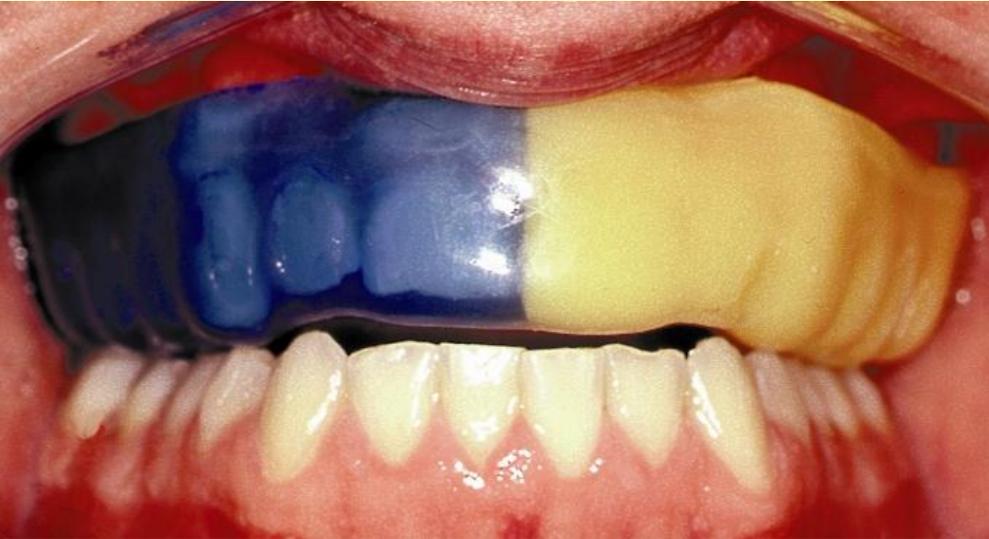
- Available from most sporting goods stores
- Least expensive kind of mouthguard
- One size fits all



The Mouth-Formed Mouthguard

- Better fit than stock mouthguards, and some can be worn with braces
- May have unpleasant odor and taste

Types of Mouthguards



The Custom-Made Mouthguard

- Individually designed and made in a dental office or professional lab
- Most expensive type
- Most comfortable fit and best protection

When it comes to protecting your teeth, any mouthguard is better than no mouthguard at all.

Discuss all types with your dentist and select one that works for your needs and budget.

Caring for Your Mouthguard

- Rinse before and after each use
- Can be brushed with toothbrush and toothpaste
- Occasionally clean in cool, soapy water and rinse thoroughly
- Place in firm, ventilated container when transporting
- Don't put in the sun or in hot water
- Check for wear and replace when necessary



Cautions and Reminders

- Don't wear removable appliances, such as retainers, with a mouthguard
- Wear a custom-fitted mouthguard if you wear braces or have a protruding jaw, receding chin, or cleft palate
- Do not chew on or cut pieces off mouthguard
- Wear during practice sessions as well as games





The Piercing Truth

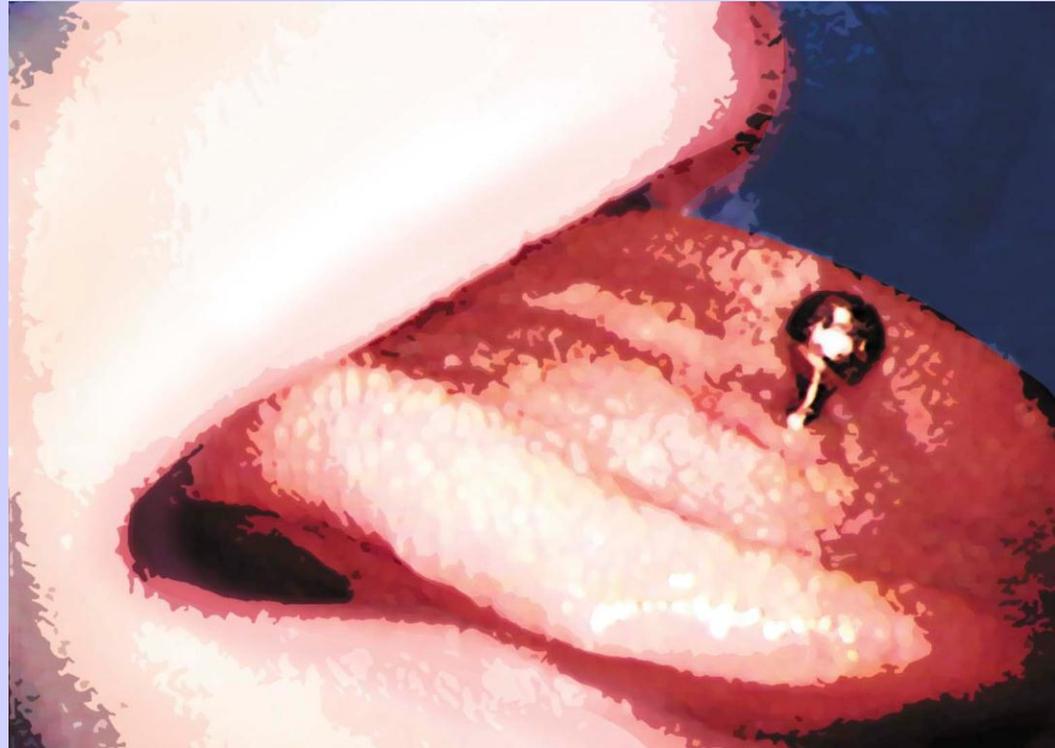
An oral piercing is not just a fashion statement - it's an added responsibility requiring constant attention and upkeep.

Harmful effects can happen during, soon after or even long after the procedure.

Before you get a tongue or lip piercing, you should know the facts to decide if it's worth it.

Oral Piercing: The Risks

- Infection, pain and swelling around the opening
- Chipped or cracked teeth
- Injuries to the gums
- Damage to fillings
- Increased salivary flow and drooling
- Hypersensitivity to metals
- Scar tissue
- Nerve damage



Oral Piercing: The Risks



Tongue piercing is especially risky...

- The tongue may swell during piercing and could block the airway
- Very possible to puncture a nerve during a tongue piercing
- This nerve damage could be permanent and affect your sense of taste or how you move your mouth

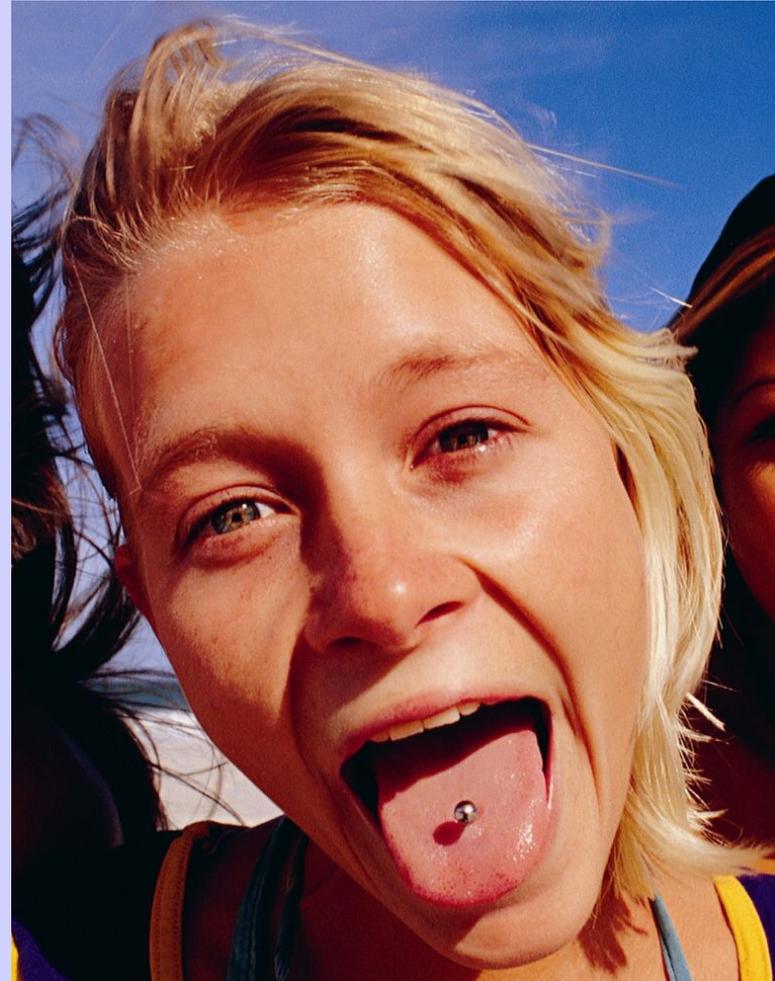
Jewelry Problems

- Touching your barbell or labrette can cause infection
- Jewelry makes it harder to talk and eat
- Can cause allergic reactions
- Food particles in the piercing can cause infection
- Accidentally swallowing jewelry can puncture your bowel or intestine
- Playing with jewelry can lead to:
 - cracked, scratched teeth
 - gum damage and recession
 - sensitive teeth

...any of which create the need for dental treatment.

If You Already Have Piercings...

- Keep the piercing clean
- Minimize stress on the site and be aware of your movements
- Check the tightness of jewelry periodically to prevent swallowing or choking on it
- Remove the jewelry for sports
- Brush and floss daily and see your dentist regularly
- Contact your dentist immediately if you see signs of infection
- Consider removing your jewelry before it becomes a problem!





Tobacco

Tobacco isn't just bad for your lungs, it's terrible for your mouth, too.

Smoking or chewing tobacco increases the risk of gum disease, cancer and other oral conditions ranging from unattractive to potentially fatal.

Regular tobacco use leads to physical dependence, even in teens.

Consequences of Tobacco Use

Here are some of the conditions that can result from smoking or chewing:

- Oral cancer
- Periodontal (gum) disease, which can cause tooth loss
- Stained teeth and gums
- Diminished sense of taste and smell
- Build-up of tartar on teeth
- Slow healing after wisdom tooth removal or other oral surgery



Oral cancer

Additional Facts About Chewing Tobacco

It can also produce leukoplakia (loo-ko-PLAY-kia), leathery white patches in the mouth that can turn into cancer.

Dippers' and chewers' gums can pull away from their teeth where the tobacco is held. When this happens, the gums usually do not grow back.

One can of smokeless delivers as much nicotine as 3 packs of cigarettes, meaning chewing tobacco is extremely addictive.

Don't believe the hype - smokeless isn't safe!

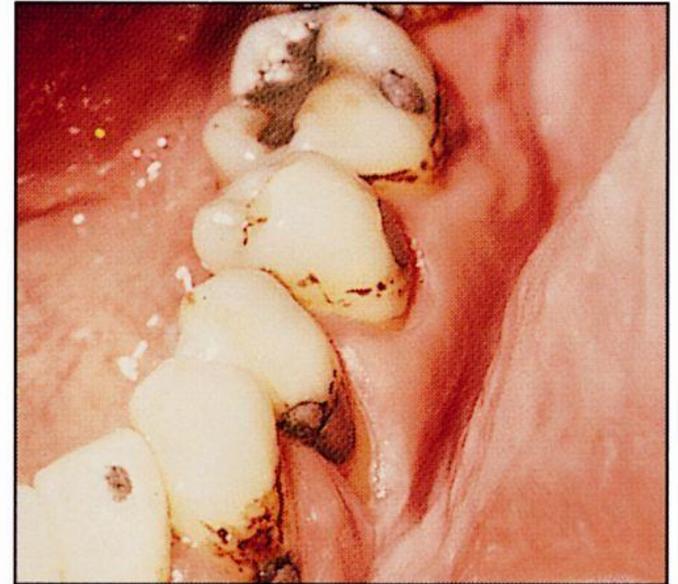


Gum recession from chewing tobacco

Tobacco Is Costly...

...to your wallet and your appearance:

- The habit can cost you hundreds of dollars a year
- It also produces unattractive consequences: bad breath, stained teeth, drooling saliva, sores, receding gums, and tobacco stains



Plainly put, going tobacco-free enhances quality of life.

Irreversible Damage

Tobacco damage is tough to treat:

- Leukoplakia and red sores can turn into cancer
- 28,000 new cases of mouth cancer are diagnosed annually, and only half of those people will live five years or more



Leukoplakia

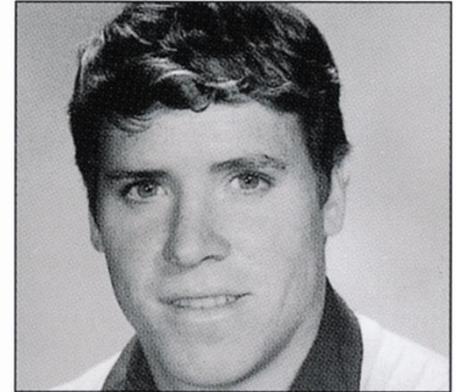
The Case of Sean Marsee

Sean started using smokeless tobacco at the age of 12. He figured chewing tobacco was safe because it was endorsed by professional athletes.

By age 18, he developed a sore on his tongue.

Doctors removed part of Sean's tongue, but the cancer spread to his neck.

Despite more disfiguring surgery, Sean died a few months short of his 19th birthday.



Sean before illness



Sean after surgery

Control Your Decisions, Control Your Habit

If you notice signs of mouth cancer, see your dentist without delay.

Early detection improves your chances for successful treatment.

If you smoke or chew, quit now.

And if you don't use tobacco, don't start.



Drugs

All illegal drugs can harm your body and your oral health. The harmful effects of methamphetamine use on oral health have recently been in the news.

Methamphetamines come in several forms, including powder, crystals, and pills. They are also called meth, speed, ice, chalk, fire, glass, or crystal.

Methamphetamines have been known to produce long-term effects such as addiction, stroke, violent behavior, anxiety, confusion and hallucinations.

Drugs

In addition to these effects, meth, like other illegal drugs, can cause severe cavities. This is partly because:

- Drugs can cause dry mouth, robbing the mouth's ability to rinse acids away food particles and acids produced by bacteria
- Users crave large amounts of sugary drinks, speeding decay
- Users tend not to brush and floss for long periods of time when they are high



“Meth Mouth”

KNOW THE RISKS of drug use. Is it worth it to you?

Braces

You or some of your friends may already be wearing braces or retainers.

In addition to making your teeth straighter and improving jaw alignment, orthodontic treatment can help keep your mouth healthier, too:

- Crooked teeth are hard to clean, leading to decay, disease, and possibly tooth loss
- Bad jaw alignment causes abnormal wear, difficulty speaking and chewing, and leads to problems with bones, jaw joints and gums

If you think you'd like to straighten up, now's the time to ask your dentist if orthodontic treatment is right for you.

Wisdom Teeth

These are your third molars, in the very back of your mouth. They usually appear during your late teens or early 20's. Since wisdom teeth can cause problems, many people have them removed.

There often isn't enough room in the mouth and they become impacted (can't fully emerge).

- Can damage adjacent teeth
- Are difficult to clean and can become infected

Get your dentist to check your wisdom teeth in your late teens to let you know if they need to be removed.



Tooth Whitening

In the last few years, it's gotten a lot easier to have a movie-star smile. Bleaching products are everywhere!

However, not all of them are safe. Know the facts about bleaching:

- Different types of whiteners include in-office bleaches, at-home bleaches, and whitening toothpastes
- Whitening toothpastes (use only ones with the ADA Seal) don't whiten as much as bleaches
- Whitening isn't permanent and can cause side effects like tooth sensitivity and sore gums
- Just because you can buy a bleaching product over the counter doesn't mean it's safe, so be cautious

Tooth Whitening

**The bottom line:
Talk to your dentist
before bleaching!**

**He or she can recommend
a product that is safe and
effective.**



Hopefully you've now learned more about how to keep your smile attractive and healthy. It takes work, but it's worth it.

Your dentist is an important partner toward this goal. Remember, you can always ask him or her for advice about your teeth and mouth.

Now that you're older and make more decisions yourself, make the right ones for good dental health!

