

Sour Candy and Your Teeth

Do your kids (or you) love sour candies? If so, their teeth may be at risk. Many of the popular sour candies sold today are nearly as acidic as battery acid. While sour candies are popular, fun, and full of flavor, the acid in them attacks teeth, weakening and wearing away tooth enamel. This can cause sensitivity to hot and cold, pain, tooth decay, and yellowing of the teeth.

To learn more about how you can protect your families' teeth, check out the Minnesota Dental Association's list of "Hard Facts" below.

The Hard Facts

The Hard Facts about Sour Candies

- In the past 20 years, candies marketed to children have increasingly been of a "fruity" or "sour" variety.
- Sour candies are very acidic, with a low pH level.*
- Some candy is so acidic it can actually burn gums and cheeks.
- Acid weakens and wears away tooth enamel.
- Teeth without protective enamel are prone to tooth decay.
- Each acid attack lasts about 20 minutes.
- Holding the acid in your mouth by prolonged candy sucking or chewing continues the acid attack.

The Signs of Tooth Erosion

- Sensitivity occurs when tooth enamel wears away. You may feel a twinge of pain when consuming hot, cold, or sweet foods and drinks.
- Discoloration is visible as a slight yellow appearance on the tooth surface.
- Transparency of the front teeth appears along the biting edges.
- Rounding of teeth occurs along the surfaces and edges of the teeth.

- Cracks and roughness appear along the edges of the teeth.
- Dents (known as cupping) develop on the chewing surfaces of the teeth. At this severe stage, fillings may actually appear to rise up.
- Tooth decay is caused by loss of the protective outermost layer of enamel.

How to Protect Your Teeth

- Reduce or eliminate consumption of sour candies.
- Don't suck or chew sour candies for long periods of time.
- If you do eat a sour candy, swish your mouth with water, drink milk, or eat cheese afterwards to neutralize the acids.
- Chew sugar-free gum to produce saliva, which protects tooth enamel.
- After eating sour candy or other acidic foods or drinks, wait one hour before brushing teeth. Brushing right away increases the harmful effects of acid on teeth.
- Ask your dentist about ways to reduce sensitivity or minimize enamel loss if erosion has begun.
- Use fluoride toothpaste and a soft toothbrush to protect your teeth.

PrimeWest Health wants to help you take care of your teeth! If you need help finding a dentist, call PrimeWest Health Member Services at **1-866-431-0801** (toll free). We're here to help. We want PrimeWest Health members to get the preventive care they need.

*For a list of acid levels in specific sour candies, go to www.powerofsour.com/userfiles/ckfiles/files/Acid_chart.pdf.

Source: "The Hard Facts" was reprinted with permission of the Minnesota Dental Association. More information may be found at www.mndental.org.

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1-866-431-0801 (toll free); TTY 1-800-627-3529 or 711

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ملاحظة: إذا أردت مساعدة مجانية لترجمة هذه الوثيقة، اتصل على الرقم أعلاه.

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