



## THE BLOCKLEY PARTNERSHIP

*Working together for your dental health*

### Safer Snacks

Tooth decay is caused by the interaction of sugar and dental plaque (the sticky film of bacteria on the surface of the teeth).

- Dental plaque forms continuously on the tooth surface.
- Each time sugar enters the mouth it is converted into acid by plaque bacteria.
- Acid attacks the teeth for 30 - 60 minutes after each meal or snack.
- Continual snacking on sugary foods and drinks greatly increases the frequency of acid attack and is much more likely to lead to tooth decay.

There are no hard and fast rules on how many times a day people can safely eat and drink sugars without damaging their teeth. Sensible advice for most people is to limit their sugar intake to meal times only.

Be aware of products claiming to be:

- Low sugar
- No added sugar
- Reduced Sugar

These may still contain enough sugar to feed the plaque bacteria and in some cases can contain large quantities.

On food labels look out for ingredients such as:

- Sucrose
- Maltose
- Fructose
- Hydrolised starch
- Glucose
- Dextrose
- Concentrated fruit juice
- Honey

These are all sugars - it is easy to be misled by the manufacturers.

To help maintain a healthy mouth remember these simple rules.

1. Limit sugary foods and drinks to meal times only.
2. Brush your teeth with a fluoride tooth paste at least twice a day.
3. Visit your dentist regularly.

### Some alternative safer snacks:

apples, pears, tangerines, bananas, strawberries, raspberries, pineapples, grapes, nectarines, peaches, plums, melons.

carrots, peppers, celery, cucumber, tomatoes, courgettes.

water biscuits, bread sticks, cream crackers, melba toast.

chappati, pitta bread, crumpets, potato cakes, matzos, rice cakes, savoury scones, cheese straws.

cheese, pizza, plain crisps, homemade plain popcorn, marmite soldiers, cheese spreads.

sugar free gum

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