

# Bad and Good Soft Drinks for Your Teeth Health

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Each year Americans drink, on average, nearly 600 cans of soda apiece. What does that do to their **teeth**? Studies have pointed to **soft drinks** as being responsible for adult's and children's **tooth decay** and obesity problems. It is a huge problem.

Many sodas contain acids and sugars that could erode **tooth enamel** over time. But when researchers affiliated with the Academy of General Dentistry placed teeth in a variety of soft drinks, they found **root beer** products did the least damage.

Consumers often consider soft drinks to be harmless, believing that the only concern is sugar content. Most choose to consume “diet” drinks to alleviate this concern. However, diet drinks contain phosphoric acid and/or citric acid and still cause dental erosion — though considerably less than their sugared counterparts.

While sugar in soft drinks is at least partially to blame for tooth decay, there are also other factors. The acidity from certain drinks also plays a role. If mouth acidity increases — and if it happens often enough — the chemical reaction hurts teeth to a greater extent. Over time the result is tooth decay.

**Soft drinks, especially light-colored drinks, and canned iced tea appear to “aggressively” harm teeth!**

“Drinking any type of soft drink poses **risk to the health of your teeth**,” says AGD spokesperson Kenton Ross, DMD, FAGD. Dr. Ross recommends that patients consume fewer soft drinks by limiting their intake to meals. He also advises patients to drink with a straw, which will reduce soda's contact with teeth.

Soft drinks like Sprite, Mountain Dew, and Arizona Iced Tea were especially harmful to tooth enamel, reports researchers from the University of Maryland Baltimore [Dental School](#). Tap water, root beer, brewed black tea, and black coffee all showed minimal enamel damage. If you're more of a soft drink kind of person, it appears that root beer might be the safest when it comes to keeping your teeth strong and healthy.

Summary:

- Non-cola soft drinks caused two to five times the damage as darker drinks, such as Coke, Pepsi, and Dr. Pepper.
- Canned iced tea caused 30 times the enamel damage as brewed tea or coffee.
- Non-cola drinks cause up to 180 times more tooth enamel damage than did water.
- Root beer was the safest soft drink tested.

The best defense against tooth decay is drinking fewer soft drinks. Also, allowing more time between soft drinks, rinsing your mouth with water after drinking, or brushing your teeth will also help.