

Healthy Food for Healthy Gums

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When you work hard to maintain a healthy weight, **eat healthy foods** and get adequate exercise you'll be rewarded, not just with better overall health, but also with **healthier gums**.



Believe it or not, the **foods you consume can affect your smile as much as brushing or flossing**. Every time you eat sugary or starchy foods, the bacteria in plaque get another chance to form dental decay-causing acid. And bad breath can make you want to hide even the most pristine teeth. But choosing foods that naturally fight bacteria, remove plaque, strengthen enamel, and freshen breath is a good way to preserve your pearly whites.

Adults who consume at least three servings of calcium each day have another reason to smile. A study published in the newly released *Journal of Periodontology* found that people who get enough calcium have significantly lower rates of **periodontal (gum) disease**, a leading cause of tooth loss.

Researchers analyzed government data on calcium consumption and periodontal disease indicators in nearly 13,000 people representing U.S. adults. They found that men and women who had calcium intakes of fewer than 500 milligrams, or about half the recommended dietary allowance, were almost twice as likely to have gum disease, as measured by the loss of attachment of the gums from the teeth. The association was particularly evident for people in their 20s and 30s.

Researcher Robert Genco, D.D.S., Ph.D., chair of the Oral Biology Department at The State University of New York at Buffalo, says the relationship between calcium and gum disease is likely due to calcium's role in building density in the alveolar bone that supports the teeth.

Gum disease is an infection caused by bacteria that accumulate in pockets between the teeth and gums. Eventually, the infection can break down and destroy the tissues and bone that support the teeth. But, if the jaw bone is kept strong with enough calcium, it may be better able to withstand the bacterial onslaught.

Janet Helm, a registered dietitian and spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association, says:

Warding off gum disease is one more good reason to make an effort to consume enough calcium, calcium is necessary for healthy bones, teeth, muscle contractions and other body functions. Yet, about three out of four people do not meet their daily need.

The American Dietetic Association says good sources of calcium include dairy foods such as milk, yogurt and cheese, dark green veggies, fortified orange juice, as well as rice and beans.

Also if you have problems with gums increase vitamin C consumption, which helps wounds heal, strengthens blood vessels, prevents cataract formation, builds connective tissue, healthy gums, skin and promotes strong teeth and bones. Vitamin C may also boost immunity and protect cells from free radical damage.

Where can you find vitamin C for my gums?

Citrus fruits, strawberries, cantaloupe, green peppers, broccoli, dark green leafy vegetables. Tomatoes Contain lycopenes – an antioxidant more potent than vitamin C. Stimulates immune function and may slow degenerative diseases. Fruit or vegetable? A fruit is the edible part of the plant that contains the seeds, while a vegetable is the edible stems, leaves, and roots of the plant.

Eat healthy food, have healthy gums and fill yourself healthy :)