



## **XYLITOL GUM**

Chew 2 pieces of Xylitol containing chewing gum five times per day for a minimum of 5 minutes. This sweetener is non-cavity forming and has been shown in studies to reduce cavity risk by 30%. Trident Xtra Care with Recaldent is a good option. This will increase the saliva flow and buffer the oral cavity so that it will be less acidic if you have had a soda. Other on-line chewing gum options with Xylitol are available.

The importance of having a healthy diet is essential to help maintain proper oral health. A reduction in drinks that may contain any acidity and or sugar, a reduction of sugar containing snacks between meals and choosing healthy alternatives will help decrease bacterial activity. Multiple exposures to sugar and the acidic drinks will cause breakdown of the enamel resulting in cavities.

## **TOOTH EROSION**

Tooth erosion is irreversible damage to the teeth as a result of chemical process that does not involve bacteria. Dissolving of mineralized tooth structure occurs upon contact with acids that are introduced into the mouth from other sources such as (e.g., acid reflux, vomiting, acidic beverages and citrus fruits).

**Preventive Measures:**

1. Diminish the frequency and severity of the acid challenge
2. Enhance the defense mechanisms of the body (stimulate salivation- sugar-free chewing gum)
3. Enhance the acid resistance, remineralization, or rehardening of the tooth surfaces (daily topical Fluoride at home; Fluoride varnish 2-4 times a yr)
4. Improve chemical protection (sugar-free antacid; eat hard cheese)
5. Decrease abrasive forces (soft brush; do not brush teeth immediately after an acidic challenge-rinse with water)
6. Provide mechanical protection (tooth colored fillings, and night-guard)

Updated: 4/20/09 kk