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Three out of Four Dentists Recommend This Blog at Halloween

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By *Lt. Cmdr. Dea L. Brueggemeyer, DC, Administrative Fellow to chief, Navy Dental Corps, U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery*



In our office, three out of four Navy dentists have a bowl of candy on their desks this Halloween season. But why? Aren't we always telling our patients not to eat sweets? Is it because we want to stay in business (as I often hear folks joke as they are reaching for the goodies)? Or do we know some super secret to enjoying our sweets without experiencing the dreaded tooth decay? Maybe. Or maybe it is not so super top secret after all.

Here are some tips for keeping your teeth healthy at Halloween and year round. After all, the candy bowl isn't just out at Halloween you know!

One key to having healthy teeth is to understand tooth decay. Tooth decay is caused by bacteria turning sugars or carbohydrates into acids. These acids break down the enamel on our teeth and cause tooth decay or "cavities". Our body fights this process by neutralizing the acids with agents found in our saliva, along with fluoride from our diet or toothpaste. But, when our teeth are in contact with acids for an extended period of time, for instance, sipping on a sports drink or Monster for several hours, our saliva loses the battle against the acids and cavities begin to form.

To prevent yourself from getting cavities try the following:

1) Limit candy/sweets to mealtimes or one snack period between meals. It takes your

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saliva 20-30 minutes to neutralize the acids produced by bacteria. It is also better to wait until after saliva does its job before brushing your teeth.

2) Avoid drinks containing sugar or diet drinks between meals. Diet drinks are very acidic and still can cause damage to your enamel. Drink water instead.

3) Chew gum containing Xylitol after meals or between meals. Xylitol is a sweetener that cannot be converted by bacteria to harmful acids. Plus, when chewed after meals, your saliva flow increases helping to further combat acids.

Practicing these three tips will help keep your teeth healthy during the holiday season and year round. Visit this blog again for more helpful tips for maintaining a happy healthy mouth.

For more good reading:

[Top 9 Foods that Damage Your Teeth](#)

Want to see how sugar stack up in your favorite drinks, snacks, fruit and desserts? Click [here](#).

[The Tooth Decay Process: How to Reverse it and Avoid a Cavity](#)

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