

**Warwickshire Dietetic Service  
and  
Warwickshire Special Care Dental Service**

**How To Look After Your  
Teeth On A  
High Sugar Diet**

Your dietitian or health professional has advised you to eat a higher calorie diet which may mean having more sugary foods and drinks than you did before.

When you eat or drink sugary things, the bacteria in your mouth react with sugar to produce acid which attacks the teeth. The acid is washed away by saliva, but this can take 1-2 hours. So if you have frequent sugary foods and drinks, e.g. sugared tea, coffee, chocolate drinks, fruit juices, squashes and fizzy pop, your teeth may be under attack all day, resulting in decay.

Sticky foods such as fudge, corn snacks and certain cakes stick to your teeth so can also be a problem.

**This leaflet is designed to help you follow the dietary advice and look after your teeth at the same time.**

## How To Look After Your Teeth on a High Sugar Diet

### So What Can You Do?

1. If you have been advised by your dietitian or health professional to take sugary snacks or drinks between meals, brush your teeth before each snack or drink whenever possible.
2. In addition, brush your teeth and gums thoroughly twice a day using fluoride tooth paste to remove the bacteria and keep your mouth healthy. Ensure brushing is before you eat or drink or at least 30 minutes after you have last eaten or had a drink. It is often impractical to wait the full two hours after eating when you have been advised to snack frequently to prevent further weight loss.
3. Let your dentist know you are on a high calorie diet and ask about preventative treatments, for example, high fluoride toothpaste or fluoride varnishes, which may help to protect your teeth.
4. Medicines also contain sugars. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if sugar-free medicines can be prescribed for you.
5. Remember, it is saliva that washes the acid away and helps repair the teeth. To increase the saliva in your mouth, try chewing sugar-free gum. Eating a cube of cheese or drinking a glass of milk after a meal can help to neutralise the acids (this also contains protein and calories).
6. If your appetite improves try to drink sweet drinks more quickly using a straw rather than sipping them slowly over a long time. Try to eat sweet foods at the end of a meal rather than as snacks in between meals to protect your teeth.

### Remember

1. Brush your teeth before sugary snacks or drinks.
2. Try to take sugary foods or drinks at meal times once your appetite improves.
3. Tell your dentist about your diet.

## How To Look After Your Teeth on a High Sugar Diet

### Equality Statement

At South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust we are fully committed to equality and diversity, both as an employer and as a service provider. We have a policy statement in our Equality Strategy that clearly outlines our commitment to equality for service users, patients and staff:

You and your family have the right to be treated fairly and be routinely involved in decisions about your treatment and care. You can expect to be treated with dignity and respect. You will not be discriminated against on any grounds including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

You have a responsibility to treat other service users, patients and our staff with dignity and respect.

Our information for patients can also be made available in other languages, Braille, audio tape, disc or in large print.

### PALS

We offer a Patient Advice Liaison Service (PALS). This is a confidential service for families to help with any questions or concerns about local health services.

You can contact the service by the direct telephone line on 01926 600 054 by email:

[Pals@swft.nhs.uk](mailto:Pals@swft.nhs.uk) or by calling in person to the PALS Office which is located in the Lakin Road

### If you have any queries about your diet, please contact us:

Dietetic Department  
George Eliot Hospital  
Nuneaton  
Tel: 024 76865098

Dietetic Department  
Warwick Hospital  
Warwick  
Tel: 01926 495321 Ext 4258

Dental Service  
Whitnash Lodge  
Royal Leamington Spa  
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