

Are athletes at a higher risk for dental problems?

When you think about athletes, the first thing that comes to mind is health. Unfortunately, recent studies are showing that although these athletes are in peak physical condition as they strive to improve in their sports, their teeth and gums are being negatively affected. In fact, research indicated that one of five athletes at the 2012 London Olympic Games showed signs of dental decay or gum disease and

18% of the Olympians stated that poor dental health could have adversely affected their performance. But this is not just limited to Olympic athletes. In general, athletes are often affected by decaying teeth and gum disease, a performance-depleting problem in which sports drinks, high-carb diets and training regimes may play a large role. With today's emphasis on the importance of sports, especially at young

ages, people need to be aware of how certain regiments and diets can be catastrophic for an athlete's oral health.

Here are some of the main concerns that athletes need to be aware of:

High Carbohydrate Diets and Energy Drinks:

Fast energy replenishment often means athletes use high-carbohydrate diets or guzzle sugary, acidic energy drinks, which without cleaning can boost the risk of tooth decay and damaged enamel. Tooth decay occurs when foods containing carbohydrates (sugars and starches), such as breads, cereals, milk, soda, fruits, cakes, or candy are left on the teeth. Bacteria that live in the mouth digest these foods, turning them into acids. The bacteria, acid, food debris, and saliva combine to form plaque, which clings to

the teeth. The acids in plaque dissolve the enamel surface of the teeth, creating holes in the teeth called cavities. This process is even amplified with the numerous high carb, high sugar, and highly acidic energy drinks like Red Bull, Monster, etc.

Dehydration: Athletes

face intense dietary and training pressures, all of which can take a toll on their teeth. One specific issue that most people would not think of would be dehydration. Dehydration has always been considered an important factor when it comes to overall body health, but most forget that it affects the

mouth as well. Saliva is extremely important in protecting teeth from erosion and decay by neutralizing the pH of the entire mouth. In addition, when a person has a dry mouth, teeth-harming bacteria are able to thrive. Therefore, depletion of saliva as a result of dehydration from heavy exercise can significantly increase the risk of poor oral health.

Juices and Sports

drinks: In response to the above issue of dehydration, many athletes turn to juices and high electrolyte sports drinks to replenish themselves. Unfortunately, these beverages can be loaded with sugar which, although pro-

vides the necessary energy, can also cause cavities and be disastrous for teeth. In fact, a new report from researchers at the University of Glasgow in the U.K. equated your glass of fruit juice to your can of soda – just with a few more vitamins. Sports drinks like Gatorade and Powerade need to be consumed in moderation and when possible, replaced with water or at least rinsed out of the mouth before damage can occur.

Dehydration and diet tend to be the biggest obstacles athletes face in maintaining dental health. Energy and sports drinks can exacerbate the issue based on how much sugar they contain. The carbohydrate-rich diet raises the risk of wear on the enamel, as well as decay. For sports where athletes need a lot of energy drinks, high fluoride toothpastes and mouth rinses should be considered to help offset these potential issues. Athletes need to be aware of the potential consequences high level training can have on their oral health, and take the necessary action to combat them.

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For more information, visit www.rochesteradvanceddentistry.com.

'Taste & Tunes' – A Swinging Cabaret Night

Blasting off the Rochester Symphony Guild's Festival of Parties this year will be a swinging cabaret night called "Taste & Tunes" on Saturday, Nov. 15 at 6:30 p.m. at the Great Oaks Country Club, Rochester.

The cocktail-attire evening will begin with a strolling silent auction with prizes and baskets filled with gifts and gift cards. A cash bar will also be available. Then, a gastronomic gourmet dinner will be served by the master chef and his

assistants. Later, be "tickled pink" by the music guests will remember from high school days performed by the fabulous Rich Eddy's Rockin' Oldies Band. Have fun singing all the old tunes!

This is the first fundraiser of the season given by the Rochester Symphony Guild in support of the Rochester Symphony Orchestra. Cost is \$75 a person.

Tables of 10 are available. For reservations call 248-651-1329 or visit www.rochestersymphony.com.

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