

# Dentistry 101: Fun Facts and Dental Myths

For whatever reason, people love to talk about teeth. Whether it's at a party, or just amongst family and friends, everyone has stories about being in the dental chair or a dental experience they want to share with others. Here's a fun fact: 50% of people surveyed say that a person's smile is the first physical trait they notice. Unfortunately, there are also many misunderstood pieces of information

about oral health that have been accepted as the truth over the years. This month, I want to shed some light on some of the dental misinformation that is out there, as well as sharing some fun facts that will help you understand the dental realities in today's society.

**Dental Myth: More sugar means more tooth decay:** It isn't the amount of sugar you eat; it is the amount



Dentally Speaking  
by  
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acidic beverages are often considered safer for teeth than sugared beverages, but can also contribute to demineralization of tooth enamel if consumed regularly. If you are going to consume any types of these beverages, don't sip on them all day long. This is when your teeth become susceptible to cavities. Drinking it quickly and rinsing with water afterwards is the best way to keep the acid off of your teeth for an excessive amount of time.

Not only does it protect your teeth, but it can be the difference maker when it comes to avoiding a concussion.

**Dental Myth: Dental decay is only a young person's problem.** Anyone, at any age, can get a cavity. In fact, as we get older, we have other factors that can make us vulnerable to oral health issues. For instance, in adults and elders, receding gums can result in root decay (decay along the roots of teeth). Medications that many adults take such as antidepressants, diuretics, antihistamines and sedatives can increase the risk of tooth decay by reducing saliva production. Lack of saliva means that the mouth is cleansed more slowly, which in turn, can lead to many issues in the mouth.

Hopefully, this helps separate the "facts" from the "fiction" when it comes to certain dental issues, while also giving you some new conversation starters at your next social gathering! The best advice I can give is to stay on a regular routine with your dentist and allow them to keep you abreast of the latest information and technology so that you can keep your entire mouth as healthy as it can be.

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**Fun Fact: Did you know the average person spends about 48 seconds per day brushing their teeth, but dentists recommend at least 2 or 3 minutes. In addition, 73% of Americans would rather go grocery shopping than floss!** Prevention is the key. You need to remove bacteria from teeth.

Brush twice a day for the recommended time with a fluoride toothpaste, and floss and rinse daily. If bacteria are removed daily from every area of your tooth, you should not have cavities.

**Dental Myth: Sensitivity in teeth Means You Have a cavity.** While cavities can cause some sensitivity to cold and sweets, not all do. In fact, most cavities do not hurt until they are extremely large. At that point, a more invasive procedure may be necessary like a root canal or actually extracting the tooth. Other things might be making your teeth sensitive like clenching and grinding during the night. Either way, please do not wait until things hurt before seeing your dentist. Attending your regular dental visits is the key to finding these cavities before they become painful and identifying any other underlying issues that could be the cause of your discomfort.

**Fun Fact: Sports-related injuries account for approximately 5 million missing teeth per year!** A sports mouth guard is very important if you or your little ones are athletes.

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