Keto & Fasting Are Destroying Your Teeth (Here's Why) Transcript

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Why Diet Affects Tooth Health

Some of the most popular diets in America today are great for your body, but they could actually be quietly weakening your teeth. I'm Dr. Michelle and I want to explain today how you can protect your teeth and actually strengthen them even while changing diets depending on weight loss desires or even dietary restrictions.

Diet has an enormous part to play in everything when it comes to oral health. And today we're going to break down these five diets and their effect on your teeth, the enamel, your gut, and everything in between.

So let's first of all dive into why does diet even influence tooth health so much? Well, Teeth, the part that you're looking at when you smile, are largely made of minerals.

Minerals, as you know, are a component often in our food. So we have to consume enough minerals to make sure that our teeth stay healthy and well. We also have to absorb enough minerals.

So those are two really important components. We also want to make sure that the environment of the mouth really reinforces the health of the tooth. So let's go through these different diets and talk about the pros and cons and what we actually see when people are using and eating in these different ways.

Keto Diet and Dry Mouth Risks

So the five diets that we're going to really dig into are keto, calorie restriction, which is what most people who are using GLP-1 medications are doing, intermittent fasting, a very popular one, and then two that are really food choice related, vegan diets and gluten-free diets.

So let's talk about each of these and how it relates to oral health, to gut health, and what you can do to make sure your mouth stays healthy even with your change in diet.

Okay, first of all, keto. What could be the concern here? It's actually beneficial in that you're eating a lot fewer carbohydrates. Now, you know, kind of the known entity for cavities is you eat sugar, you get cavities.

It's not one plus one equals two. The bacteria in your mouth actually eat the sugar and they excrete acid and that's how a cavity is formed. So it really is, you eat a carbohydrate and it can lead to a cavity, primarily if that carbohydrate stays in the mouth long enough and if there are enough bacteria there to eat the carbohydrate.

So it doesn't just mean that anybody who eats carbohydrates is going to get cavities. That's not how this goes. If you brush your teeth and take good care of them and don't put carbohydrates on your teeth very often, You're going to be okay.

But in a keto diet, this is even easier, right? You're eating very few carbohydrates. The challenges come twofold. Number one, often in a keto diet, it leads to a very dry mouth.

Why is that problematic? Well, saliva is the mouth's natural cleanser and also balancer. When we eat, there's always an acidic rise. There's more acid in the mouth when we eat.

It's the start of digestion. So with time, saliva comes in, washes out any last food particles, but also brings minerals in to balance that acidity. So the acidity doesn't stay and the teeth are able to remineralize.

Without saliva, that natural process does not happen. The teeth lose minerals during that acid attack during any meal. And if the saliva doesn't come and replenish or restock those teeth, the teeth are then prone to tooth decay, as well as sensitivity, cracking, a lot of other things.

So a dry mouth can be incredibly problematic. The other issue is when you're eating a lot of protein-containing foods, they actually don't contain as many minerals.

Calorie Restriction and GLP-1 Oral Health

The minerals are often found in fruits and vegetables. So you may be mineral deficient, which means you may need a supplement or purposefully think about adding mineral-rich foods.

So can you eat keto and have a healthy mouth? You can, but the key is you need to make sure you're adding minerals both on the outside of the teeth and on the inside.

So hydroxyapatite, which is the mineral your teeth are made of, you add that back in during every tooth cleaning procedure, but also during the day. So I have a wonderful mint that has hydroxyapatite in it.

You pop that when you're feeling that dry mouth time. Or our breath spray also has hydroxyapatite. You just want to add minerals back during the day if your saliva is low.

The second thing is minerals on the inside. That's tooth and bone formula, vitamin D3, vitamin K2. Those ensure that you're going to get enough minerals and make them available for your body to use to keep your teeth healthy and well.

So that's issue number one. Now calorie restriction. In this diet, like I said, which is commonly used with GLP-1 medications, it's actually not that different from what we just talked about with keto.

There's also an issue of dry mouth. The fewer times that you're eating, the fewer times you have that saliva wash that comes in, balances everything out, cleans the mouth.

Dry mouth is actually a common occurrence during some of these calorie restricted diets. So again, minerals on the outside, minerals on the inside. Make sure you're bathing your teeth with what they need to stay well.

Our mints are also very good at gum health because dry mouth also can lead to gum sensitivity, gum irritation, and sometimes even gingivitis. So making sure that your mouth is staying moist with the right thing is really going to be important.

And then during calorie restriction, Often that means mineral restriction as well. So what I frequently see is brittle teeth, yellowing teeth, weak teeth, tooth decay, sensitivity, all of these happening when people are on GLP-1 medications.

Intermittent Fasting and Timing Tooth Care

Why? your body is not getting extra of anything right now. In fact, it's getting less than it may even really require to do what it's used to doing. So it used to be able to keep your teeth well, but now it has less resources.

It has to keep your brain going and your heart going. It has to choose. So your teeth, the kind of bottom of the barrel. You have to make sure that you're adding extra minerals on the outside, on the inside to keep them well, even if you are restricting calories in your diet.

The next one is intermittent fasting. So when you think about intermittent fasting, you're basically talking about these two different diets that we're already discussing, but just doing them at different times during the day.

So, if you are going without food for sometimes these windows are quite large, 12, 16 hours even without food, the things you have to be concerned about are dry mouth again and mineral depletion.

You have to be supplementing and protecting the teeth during those times. Now, during the eating window to this little window that you're actually eating food during, you have to make sure that you are not brushing too soon after

eating because the window is short.

You might be brushing right before, might be brushing right after eating. You have to make sure you've given your mouth time to rebalance, about 30 minutes.

Vegan Diets and Fat-Soluble Vitamin Deficiency

So wait 30 minutes after eating before brushing your teeth. But make sure you're protecting, adding minerals on the outside, minerals on the inside. Okay, now the next two are less what we're choosing not to eat and more about food choices with our diet.

Vegan or vegetarian diets actually have another thing that's really a little bit threatening when eating this way, and that is fat soluble vitamins. So clear back in the 1940s, Dr.

Weston Price actually studied all sorts of different indigenous societies. He was looking to see what did they eat, And what was their health like? And then looking for a correlation and he found one.

What he found is that people who are healthier overall had healthier teeth, healthier mouths, healthier bodies, healthier bones, healthier fertility, all of these things.

They ate more fat soluble vitamins, 10 times more in fact. What are those vitamins? Vitamins A, D, E and K. And the D is D3 and K is K2. These are largely found in animal products.

So if you are not eating animal products as part of your dietary choice, you are going to have to supplement these. So supplementing particularly with a vitamin D3 K2 supplement is going to be so essential.

I'll always remember a patient that I saw. She is a leader in the health and wellness world. She teaches people how to eat well and really is kind of this pinnacle of health when you look at her.

She came one day because her daughter was getting married and she wanted to get her teeth cleaned. So I just had her go to my hygienist and said, she just needs her teeth cleaned today.

My hygienist came to get me a little while later and she said, you're going to need to come and do an exam. I said, no, no, she's just here to get her teeth cleaned so that her, you know, for her daughter's wedding, they could look good.

And she said, No, you need to come and do an exam today." So we went and I did an exam. She had 15 cavities. We were both blown away. What in the world is going on here?

Well, she had eaten a largely vegan diet for the last decade. She was just simply deficient in those fat soluble vitamins. And what do those fat soluble vitamins do?

Well, they in essence help the minerals go where they need to go. That's the key. So you have to have minerals along with the fat soluble vitamins, which is why the tooth and bone formula and vitamin D3 and K2 are so essential in keeping your teeth well.

So back to the same conversation, minerals on the outside, minerals on the inside. If you are not eating fat soluble vitamins, you have got to supplement.

Otherwise, your teeth are going to suffer. The last one is a gluten-free diet. Now, you might think, okay, well, I'm reducing my carbohydrates. This is going to be great.

Less food for the bacteria in my mouth to eat. But if you've eaten gluten-free for very long, you'll know that that's not actually true because we substitute.

I've eaten gluten-free for years. And what happens is you end up substituting gluten or wheat or rye or some of these other gluten-containing grains.

Gluten-Free Diets and Hidden Starches

for starches. If you look at the package of gluten-free foods, they have cornstarch, potato starch, tapioca starch. They are full of starches. What are starches?

They are simple sugars in essence. So they are your bacteria's favorite foods. They like them even more than they like, let's say, a whole wheat grain.

Why? Because they have to work a lot less hard to get what they need out of it. So those simple starches are usually gummy, sticky, right? They add things like xanthan gum and psyllium husk and other things that make them a little gummy to make it like taste like bread.

And those make them stick on your teeth even longer. So gluten-free diets can be some of the most dangerous diets depending on what you're substituting.

So, like I said, I eat largely gluten-free. I actually eat none of those processed gluten-free items because things like oranges and carrots and rice and potatoes They're naturally gluten-free.

I don't substitute starches. I just eat foods that already don't have gluten in them. If you do want to eat those foods, you need to be extremely diligent in your tooth care practices.

So you need to make sure you're brushing, you're flossing. In fact, I highly recommend using our toothpaste or our gum health mouthwash because both of them have something called protectin in them.

which basically prevents the bacteria from sticking together and creating colonies or cities in your mouth. So if they can't stick together and they can't live there, then giving them more starch or more food isn't going to be as detrimental.

So again, think about what you're putting on your teeth and what you need to do about it. So let's summarize here. Almost all of these diets have some real common themes, right?

It's all about understanding that minerals are essential for keeping teeth well. Minerals come from the outside in the form of hydroxyapatite. That might be tooth powder, toothpaste, mouthwash, mints, all of these things to deliver hydroxyapatite to the outsides of the teeth.

Make sure you're keeping your teeth clean, but don't brush sooner than 30 minutes after the meal. Minerals on the inside. That's going to be your vitamins D3 and K2.

Remember healthy mouths required those fat soluble vitamins at 10 times the amount level.

How to Protect Teeth on Any Diet

So vitamins D3 and K2 and minerals that are specific to teeth and bones. It is possible. to be on your diet and still have a healthy mouth. But if you have signs like sensitivity, cracking, gum sensitivity, yellowing of your teeth, you're getting a little dark spot around the gum line, any of those things, you know you're going to have to increase your mineral levels.

Hopefully this is helpful. If you know somebody who needs to hear this, please send this to them, share it, subscribe to the channel. We're trying to just get information in your hands to help you live well.

Because my mission in life is to simply help more people live well. If you'd like to come to the dental office, we're in American Fork, Utah. We would love to see you here.

If you need to find a dentist closer to home, go check out my directory at livingwellwithdrmichelle.com. And all of these things are just intended to help your mouth be healthy, no matter what you're doing in your mouth and in your life.

Because again, that's my mission. you