

'Yoghurt' chewing gum aims to tackle tooth decay

A CHEWING gum, which uses "good bacteria" to help prevent tooth decay, could be in the shops as early as next year.

Tooth decay happens when streptococcus mutans bacteria stick to the surface of teeth, producing an acid that eats away at the protective enamel.

The new gum contains a strain of the bacteria Lactobacillus found in live yoghurt, which attach to the decay-causing bacteria, preventing them from adhering to teeth.

The German company BASF, which produced the gum in collaboration with OrganoBalance, claims its product can reduce the amount of harmful bacteria in the mouth 50-fold.

Stefan Marcinowski, executive director at BASF, said the chewing gum "has been tested on large numbers of people and demonstrated the ability to significantly reduce bacterial levels".

"This bacterium is well established and safe," said Mr Marcinowski.

The company is also developing deodorants that inhibit odour-producing bacteria.

Many chewing gums already contain the artificial sweetener xylitol that prevents bacteria from sticking to teeth.

This article: <http://news.scotsman.com/health.cfm?id=1225992006>

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Comments

1. **Alan**, Glasgow / 8:27am 21 Aug 2006

Ooooooh - good bacteria....bad bacteria....good bacteria....

Cut out sugar. Avoid fluoride like the plague. No bad teeth. Try it.

2. **Sed quis custodiet ipsos custodes**, Poleps Rbelpuic of Scatolnd / 2:19pm 21 Aug 2006

I find it all a little hard to swallow.

3. **rawhide**, glasgow / 2:57pm 21 Aug 2006

kin ye blow big bubbles wi it.

4. **John**, Chicago / 5:01pm 21 Aug 2006

"Cut out sugar. Avoid fluoride like the plague. No bad teeth. Try it."

My mother-in-law did try that. She's a very health-conscious raw food vegan who avoids all refined foods (including sugar), and brushed regularly with a non-flouride toothpaste. Last year her dentist found 14 cavities.

Listen to your dentist. Flouride works.

5. **Graham**, Scotland / 7:03pm 21 Aug 2006

Finland in particular are world leaders in this regard. See "The Rocky Road of Xylitol to its Clinical Application" published in the Journal of Dental Research in 2000:-

<http://idr.iadrjournals.org/cgi/reprint/79/6/1352> [<http://idr.iadrjournals.org/cgi/reprint/79/6/1352>]

6. **Brian**, NSW Australia / 10:41pm 21 Aug 2006

John 4 FLOURIDE is a poison, Eastern Europe wont use it. Canada is gradually removing it The US is reducing the dosage. It is not eliminated from the body it stays in the gut. It adversely affects the brain reducing your mental resistance.

7. **Elsa**, NE UK / 11:07pm 21 Aug 2006

Seems like a good idea, do dentists recommend it?

8. **Graham**, Scotland / 6:02pm 22 Aug 2006

Dr Theresa Madden, Colgate Senior Lecturer in Periodontology at Otago University, New Zealand does indeed recommend the use of Xylitol gum. See:-

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/GE0608/S00010.htm> [<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/GE0608/S00010.htm>]

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