

Dental News

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BASF to Market Bacteria-Fighting Chewing Gum

Author: CS/DZ



Photo: DTI

BASF, a German chemical company, has designed a chewing gum containing bacteria that can destroy tooth decay causing bacteria. The gum might be available in stores as early as next year.

The company discovered new strain of bacteria generally found in live yogurt, called *Lactobacillus anti-caries*, which binds to *Streptococcus mutans*. *S. mutans* that stick to the tooth surface and produce an aggressive acid that breaks down the enamel. Gum containing *L. anti-caries* will cause the *S. mutans* to stick together, thus preventing them from being able to attach themselves to the tooth surface.

The gum has already been tested on a number of people and demonstrated a fifty-percent reduction of bacterial levels in the mouth, said the executive director of research at BASF, Stefan Marcinowski. He announced that BASF will also release other dental products containing *L. anti-caries* such as toothpastes and mouthwashes.

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