

Toothpaste ingredients that promote a healthy mouth and body

(by Ann Generlich PR and Marketing Manger Purity Laboratories/ Beverly Hills Formula)

The battle to stay healthy by looking after your teeth and gums involves keeping plaque at bay. This message was emphasised by the British Dental Health Foundation during National Smile Month. Beverly Hills Formula is working with The British Dental Health Foundation and the NPA year book 2007 to spread the message of good oral health. Strong health education messages currently promote a healthy mouth, which is essential for a healthy body. Maintaining oral hygiene should be a lifelong habit.

Research suggests that bad diseases such as heart attacks, strokes, oral cancer, diabetes, ulcers or pneumonia can start in the mouth. An oral infection can affect the whole body. In fact, there is growing clinical evidence that small infections in the mouth may be a contributing factor to several diseases. There are hundreds of different types of oral bacteria in the mouth which can enter the bloodstream through small tears in the gums and can be especially dangerous to people who have illnesses such as heart disease or diabetes. The bacteria can infect the liver and cause it to produce artery-clogging proteins, or may directly infect the arteries causing blockages and heart failure. New research suggests that losing teeth at a young age could be an early warning of Alzheimer's in later life. Studies have shown a link between gum disease marked by teeth loss and brain disease. Scientists think it is not the gum disease but the accompanying inflammation that helps to trigger Alzheimer's. The early exposure to inflammation quadruples the risk of developing the disease at an old age, the research suggests. Infections such as influenza, rheumatic fever and tuberculosis also create inflammation - but inherited genes for Alzheimer's are a much bigger risk factor.

Today, concern with personal health is increasing and many individuals avidly read the latest pronouncements in the media by health experts. Much can be done to reduce the burden of oral diseases and achieve "Healthy People" objectives by using a multifaceted approach that includes community-based initiatives, self-care and professional care.

Strong health education messages to promote a healthy mouth and therefore a healthy body are vital. The following initiatives need to be implemented and developed: caries prevention, dietary control (a balanced diet that limits snacks high in sugars and carbohydrates) and daily brushing with fluoride toothpaste (fluoride mouth rinse); use of dental floss; water fluoridation; frequent routine dental examinations and oral health advice, public information campaigns, are a significant stepping stone and crucial weapon against oral diseases. More support for health professionals also needs to be provided. Early diagnosis and treatment of oral diseases, best accomplished through periodic examinations, reduce patients' risk of tooth loss, systemic health effects and even in rare cases, death!

Brushing teeth with toothpaste is important for several reasons. First and foremost, a toothpaste and a correct brushing action work to remove plaque, a sticky, harmful film of bacteria that grows on your teeth that causes caries, gum disease, and eventual tooth loss if not controlled. Second, the toothpaste contains fluoride, which makes the entire tooth structure more resistant to decay and promotes remineralisation, which aids in repairing early decay before the damage can even be seen. Third, special ingredients in the toothpaste help to clean and polish the teeth and remove stains over time and help to maintain a healthy mouth, which is essential for a healthy body. Fourth, toothpastes help freshen breath and leave your mouth with a clean feeling.

Toothpaste manufacturers are developing toothpastes with active ingredients to promote healthy teeth and gums as a vital part of a proactive health maintenance regime. Multi-action, anti-bacterial ingredients help fight plaque. Xylitol reduces tooth decay and provides additional protection that enhances all existing prevention methods by inhibiting the growth of bacteria, resulting in fewer cavities and increased protection against gum disease. Xylitol helps to stop plaque build up (plaque is a cause of gum disease, tooth decay, bad breath and bleeding gums). Xylitol is also a mild anti-bacterial agent. Xylitol is a natural sweetener, however as it is not fermentable by cavity-causing oral bacteria it does not contribute to tooth decay. It can make plaque less adhesive and stimulate salivary flow. Therefore xylitol not only relieves dry mouth, but also helps clear bacteria and promote tooth remineralisation.

Calcium lactate prevents the build-up of tartar irritating the gums and prevents attracting the harmful bacterial products. Folic acid is used in our bodies to make new cells and therefore helps with tissue growth and cell function as well as battling gingivitis and making the gums more resilient and problem resistant.

Coenzyme Q10 and Green Tea are two new ingredients that further improve the ability to keep teeth strong and healthy. Coenzyme Q10, an important antioxidant, is a vitamin-like substance vital to the body's energy supply. The mouth contains both friendly and unfriendly bacteria, which depend on different vitamins for their energy production processes. Harmful bacteria depend on vitamin K and friendly bacteria typically use Coenzyme Q10. CoQ10 is a powerful antioxidant (an antioxidant protects cells from chemicals known as free radicals) and it has been shown to help fight several aspects of cardiovascular or heart disease. Many studies have shown that people who suffer with periodontal (gum and jaw) disease and gingivitis may also be deficient in this compound, as it has a protective and strengthening action in all tissues. CoQ10 seems to assist cell repair, which requires a large amount of energy. Tissue affected by gingivitis is deficient in CoQ10 and experiments have shown that supplementation can decrease inflammation. The natural amount of CoQ10 in the body declines with age, so anyone over 50 will especially benefit from taking this supplement. By using a toothpaste that contains Coenzyme Q10 it is possible to alter the balance of oral bacteria in favour of desirable bacteria and to create a less favourable

environment for the bacteria responsible for gum disease. Q10 protects against periodontal decline and decreases periodontal pocket depth and helps gum healing.

Green Tea has long been associated with good health. It suppresses bacterial growth in the mouth, slowing down the build-up of plaque and helping to prevent cavities. Green tea is also used for its antioxidant properties, to help fight mental and physical fatigue, its general health enhancing properties, in the fight against cancer, to help to prevent blood clotting tendencies, lower blood cholesterol levels and regulate blood sugar levels. It contains various compounds such as catechin, epigallocatechin, flavonoids, bioflavonoids, fluoride, gallic acid, polyphenols, tannin, theophylline, vitamin C as well as a small amount of caffeine.

Lactoferrin, Whey (milk) Protein plays an important role in protecting against pathogens and stimulating the immune system. Benefits of lactoferrin in toothpaste include anti-inflammatory effects. Lactoferrin also helps to resolve oral lesions, prevents adhesion of bacteria to periodontal tissues and teeth and offers anti-bacterial, anti-viral, anti-parasitic and anti-oxidant effects. Last but not least Lactoferrin also puts a stop against dry mouth.

Aloe Vera is a soothing/ healing agent. It is also a powerful nutritional supplement and anti-oxidant. In toothpaste it can offer the dental benefits such as the treatment of gum disease, gingivitis and periodontitis, it can reduce bleeding gums and can be used as a sedative dressing in root canal treatments, treatment of mouth ulcers and gum abscesses.

Vitamin E is an Anti-Oxidant and protects cells against the effects of free radicals which are potentially damaging by-products of energy metabolism. Free radicals can damage and may contribute to the development of cardiovascular disease and cancer. Vitamin E has also been shown to play a role in immune function, in DNA Repair, and other metabolic processes.

Folic acid is a B vitamin, which helps the body to make healthy new cells. Folic Acid has been shown to be effective in the treatment of gingivitis. Gingivitis is an inflammation of the gums, usually caused by bacteria. Folic Acid may increase the resistance of the gingival to local irritants and thus lead to a reduction in inflammation. Panthenol, another important member of the B Vitamins used in the organism reduces inflammation, soothes irritation and counteracts bacteria, initiates rebuilding of the skin and is an excellent hydrator. It is excellent in oral hygiene as it soothes/heals minor wounds.

Maintaining a healthy smile begins at home. Besides regular dental checkups, spending a few minutes caring for your teeth and gums each day can help keep your smile healthy. In addition to toothpastes that offer health-promoting ingredients there are also products that offer special benefits such as tartar, sensitivity control or teeth whitening. For further information, please visit www.beverlyhillsformula.com