



Summers and Dental Care.

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Introduction

The summer season is about to end, despite the fact of very warm temperature, it is also one of the longest seasons in Asian countries e.g. Pakistan. In this harsh climatic condition to maintain overall good health, oral health maintenance is one of the primary concerns. As unfortunately, Dental problems are also exaggerated in summers. It can badly affect the health of teeth and gums.

So we must not only be aware of the certain factors which can lead to damage the oral health but also we should be able to know that how to deal with them e.g.

- Water intake should be increased to avoid dehydration, as a dry mouth creates a suitable environment for a bacterial and acidic attack on teeth. It can also decrease the amount of saliva production in the mouth which is the primary source of repair and remineralization of the enamel surface of teeth. Drink water frequently and keep yourself hydrated.
- In warm weather, it is common to use ice in water and beverages. Some people have the habit of chewing ice which can damage the enamel surface leading to hypersensitivity of teeth. It can also cause chipping away of teeth.
- To beat the heat use of excessive sugary food and beverages e.g. canned juices and soda drinks, ice creams, etc. is not a good option either as it provides a friendly environment for bacterial growth which can cause multiple caries on teeth surfaces.

- In summer break outdoor activities have been increased e.g. football, hockey, beach volleyball. There are more incidences of falls and hit injuries reported including fractured tooth, tooth knocked out, facial trauma, etc. Sports provide healthy physical activities but it is also important to wear protective gear, such as helmets, protective pads and other gear to avoid mishaps.
- The use of sunscreens is not only important for the face and body but also use lip balm with SPF, It will keep your lips moisturized and also protect them from harmful effects of UV rays.
- During warm weather conditions, people experience more dental complaints like severe toothache due to rapidly spreading chronic inflammation and infections. Proper oral hygiene maintenance and regular dental checkups are very necessary.
- To add a sufficient amount of water and fluids in our diet some mostly people use canned and packaged juices which contain preservatives to increase shelf life and enhance taste like nitrosamine, sulfites, etc. They have the ability to transform into carcinogen agents and are very harmful to our health. Even those labeled as non- preservatives, on which oxygen has been removed so it is very unhealthy. These packaged juices also contain synthetic food colors causing staining and discoloration of teeth. So always use fresh fruits and juices in your diet instead of packed n canned form.
- Vitamin C (Ascorbic acid) rich food is very important for the maintenance of oral health and keeps our gums healthy and gets rid of certain oral diseases like scurvy (bleeding gums). In summers there are so many vitamin C rich seasonal fruits available in Pakistan e.g. Mangoes, Strawberries, Melon. Using lemon and citrus fruits is also very helpful for healthy gums.
- Keep switching of frozen cold (ice cream and drinks) and hot beverages (tea) and meal very fast put thermal stresses on teeth. It can damage enamel by creating micro-cracks which can severely increase the sensitivity of teeth or can dislodge fillings.
- In summers dental problems are exaggerated so must plan your dental appointment with a Dentist for proper guidance and treatment of all your dental conditions.

Maintenance of oral hygiene not only in summers but throughout the year is very necessary. According to ADA (American Dental Association) recommendations by brushing twice a day, floss (cleaning in between teeth) once a day is very important. Dental checkups should be a must after every 6 months for the maintenance of overall good oral health.