



## Dental Decay and Sugar

- Is caused by the formation of acids in the mouth.
- Acids are formed by bacteria in the mouth fermenting dietary sugars that stick onto the teeth turning them into acids (lactic acids) which destroy tooth enamel dentine.
- Bacteria plus sugars equal Dental Plaque.
- The 2 main bacteria that cause dental decay or caries are Streptococcus Mutans and Lactobacillus Acidophilus.
- Sugar was introduced into western civilizations in the mid 1700's and gradually refined and utilized today in many of the processed foods we eat.
- Sugar as cane sugar represents the major proportion of consumed sugar. However many alternative sweeteners, honey, glucose syrups, fructose in fruits, corn syrups all make up the sugar food parcel.
- In spite of the introduction of Fluoride, decay rates in the USA and Australia in 5 year old children has risen 14% in the past 5 years – an alarming rate attributed to the amount of sugar in diets and the increased use of filtered water, most of which is not fluoridated.
- The Australian Bureau of Statistics found that Australians per capita apparent sugar consumption dropped 10% from 46kg to 42kg in 2011 from a peak of 57kg in 1951. This was still 10kg greater than the USA.
- There is quite an argument going on in Australia regarding the data for a supported decline in sugar consumption that contradicts the rapid increase in obesity in children and diabetes Type II in the community.
- So the paradox is perhaps more complex and explained by our changing diets, dietary habits, frequency of meals, snacking and percentage of sugar in the foods we eat and drink.

**Please do not hesitate to contact staff with any enquiries**