



# Erosion of Teeth

Ever noticed that your teeth seem to be sensitive, getting shorter or their appearance appears yellowish glazed and lifeless? It's probably due to erosion. Dental erosion refers to the loss of tooth structure primarily caused by acid accumulation in the mouth. This must be differentiated from dental attention caused by wear as a result of grinding of tooth surfaces. The acids that cause dental erosion can be extrinsic i.e. dietary, industrial or pharmacological. Many factors modify the erosion process including saliva, oral hygiene practices, presence or absence of fluoride.

## **Extrinsic acid sources include:**

- Dietary – citrus fruit, soft drink, vinegar, pickles
- Medicines – ascorbic acid, aspirin, iron tonics, diuretics
- Occupational – wine tasters, acid vapour, dust
- Recreational – coffee

## **Intrinsic Acid sources:**

- Anatomic – hiatus hernia, GORD
- Psychological – bulimia, anorexia, alcoholism, stress
- Medication – chemotherapy, severe asthma.

## **Management of Dental Erosion**

### **4 main steps**

#### **1. Behavioural**

- Rinse mouth after acid attack e.g. reflux with water milk or 0.2% fluoride mouth rinse
- Delay brushing teeth for 30 minutes to permit saliva stabilisation of tooth mineral structure

#### **2. Chemical control and protection**

- Proton pump inhibitors to control gastric reflux e.g. Nexium, Pariet
- Fluoride mouth rinses

#### **3. Physical protection of teeth**

- Night guards
- Fluoride trays at night or combined with night guards
- Full coverage crowns over the teeth

#### **4. Maintenance**

- Regular dental visits

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