



Top ten tooth rotters!

Sugar: Sweets, pastries, cakes, biscuits, chocolate Only sugar can penetrate the teeth's strong enamel coating. An excess of refined sugar also dissolves the minerals essential for healthy teeth.

Artificial sweeteners Look out for 'hidden' sugars in contents list such as sucrose, dextrose and maltose, which are often found in artificial sweeteners. Sticky sweet treats: Toffee, sweet sauces and other oh so naughty sticky stuff all cling to teeth so making sure you brush after eating them is even more important.

Fruit juice (especially orange, grapefruit and any citrus fruit) The sugars in fruit are not released until it is chewed, but in fruit juice the sugars are more likely to be in contact with the teeth for longer so avoid using fruit juice in a baby's feeding bottle and preferably drink it with a straw.

Fizzy drinks Sports drinks and colas are loaded with sugar or artificial sweeteners and diet fizz can be high in phosphorous, which although essential for strong teeth, can literally drag calcium out of the teeth if drunk in excess. Use a straw if you must drink them.

White bread Often contain hidden sugar as well as becoming very sticky when chewed.

Processed cereals Read the labels carefully – you'll be amazed at how much sugar is hidden in these so-called healthy carbohydrates.

Crisps and chips Cooked starch breaks down into component sugars. Opt for carbs low on the glycaemic index such as sweet potato.

White wine Can be very acidic and contribute to erosion. Drinking little and often is far worse than drinking once a day at meal times.

Red wine, tea and coffee as well as strongly coloured Indian food Can increase the risk of staining your teeth, particularly if you're not brushing them as much as you should be. Plaque left behind on teeth is susceptible to staining so brushing after a curry and a glass of red wine is even more important!