

KICKING SODA TO THE CURB



A CHECKLIST FOR YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN



Dentistry
for Children and Adolescents
PEDIATRIC SPECIALISTS



Soda. Coke. Pop. Sodie-pop. Soft drinks. Teeth-ruiners.
Yes, we said teeth-ruiners.

Did you know that 16 teaspoons of sugar are in one 20-ounce bottle of soda? The daily recommended amount of sugar for the average American is 5 to 9 teaspoons. The amount of sugar individuals crave is directly related to how much sugar they consume.

So, the more soda you drink, the more you'll crave it. And as we all know, overindulgence in sugar is bad for your teeth.

Did you know that the acid in soda attacks your teeth for about 20 minutes, and that those 20 minutes start over after every sip? That acid attacks teeth, which lessens the enamel's level of hardness.



Soda is bad for your health in many ways other than tooth decay. It also increases your caloric and sugar intake because it is often drunk in place of water. Long-term soda consumption is linked to diabetes and obesity. And children are likely to drink soda instead of healthier options, if it's available.

So parents, there is an easy solution: Don't make soda available. Buying it regularly to have on hand contributes to the habit. If children are inclined to start drinking soda at a young age, they will likely drink increasingly more as they age.

Kick soda to the curb with this checklist!



How to Stop

- Begin by making note of how much soda you and your family are drinking. Decide if you're going to track consumption by cans, bottles or ounces.
- Next, set a realistic date for when your family will stop drinking soda regularly. If family members consume more than three soft drinks per week, break the goal down week-by-week so it seems more attainable.
- Have straightforward talks with your family about why you're cutting down or nixing soda. First, make sure that you and your partner are on the same page. Then, explain to your children what soda does to their teeth and overall health. Focus on the benefits of replacing it with healthier alternatives.



- At the same time, encourage drinking water. If your family prefers a little more flavor, try water flavoring drops or packets. It's important to carefully inspect labels to ensure what you buy isn't also packed with sugar. Other substitutes include unsweetened ice tea, flavored tea, milk or smoothies.
- Start to use fluoride toothpaste and mouthwash, especially if your home uses well water. When your dental health is put at risk by drinking acidic and sugary drinks, using fluoridated products is one effective solution.
- Celebrate with something fun and active! Cutting out soda isn't easy, especially if it made up a large portion of your liquid intake in the past. You made the change because you wanted your family to be healthier, so continue that trend! Find an activity the whole family can enjoy, like a bike ride or basketball in the driveway. Just don't forget your water bottles!



On Those Special Occasions

It's our job to push you and your family to maintain optimal dental health. And we understand that occasional soft drinks aren't going to make your teeth fall out.

Following our checklist for cutting out soda can help your family view drinking it as a sweet treat. But what can you do to minimize its damage when you do drink it?

In the case that you do treat yourself, drink through a straw so the drink has less contact with your teeth.

And after you finish drinking it, don't immediately brush your teeth. That sounds contradictory coming from us, right? On any other occasion we would encourage a good scrub-a-dub for those pearly whites.

But, the acid and sugar from soda weakens enamel. In this case, brushing further damages your teeth and result is lessened hardness. So, wait about 30 minutes before brushing. If you can't brush your teeth, then swish water around your mouth to dilute the acid and sugar.





Reap the Benefits



Once you have succeeded in quitting your soda habit, take note of any dental and body changes. Ask us if we can see a difference in your child's teeth and we probably will! And if your family has replaced soda with water, you might be noticing increased energy, less fatigue and a major decrease in sugar cravings around your house.

Sustain this habit and continue to encourage other good dental hygiene practices. If you have other questions about how your child's diet can affect their teeth, give us a call at one of our locations below.



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Ensure your child is receiving the best dental care by selecting the right provider for your family's needs. At Dentistry for Children and Adolescents, we deliver oral health care that is comprehensive, accessible and family-centered for children and adolescents.

To learn more about us and the services we can provide your family, call either one of our locations:

Creve Coeur, MO at 314-567-1122

St. Charles, MO at 636-946-5225