

The naturopathic advisor



Natural Lifestyle has teamed up with experts at CNM (College of Naturopathic Medicine) to answer some of your burning health questions. This issue, you asked:



Q My dentist says I'm not taking care of my gums. How can I help them naturally?

Oral health is hugely important. Several heart diseases have been linked to inflammation directly caused by oral bacteria. Diabetes and its complications, respiratory infections and adverse pregnancy outcomes are also significantly associated with dental issues, such

as tooth loss and advanced gum disease. Here's how you can help yourself:

- Don't eat sugary, sticky foods, such as soft drinks, sweets, white flour and processed foods. They feed bacteria.
- Increase your CoQ10.

If periodontal (gum) disease is already a problem or if you take a certain type of statin drug, you would be best to supplement CoQ10 to get therapeutic levels of this nutrient.

- Vitamin B deficiencies can cause poor oral health. Rich food sources of B vitamins include mushrooms, sardines, mackerel, and beans, such as cannellini beans, chickpeas, lima beans and pinto beans.
- Raw onions have powerful properties that are antibacterial and work with vitamin C to strengthen

and heal the gums.

- Green tea promotes periodontal health, reducing inflammation, preventing bone resorption and limiting the growth of bacteria associated with periodontal diseases.
- Leafy green vegetables require much chewing, which is great for gums. The chewing action creates more saliva which flushes out food particles, bacteria, and plaque.
- Carrots, celery, cashews – foods that are very crunchy and low in sugar are excellent at scraping away stuck-on food and plaque.
- Strawberries and bell peppers – these are rich in both vitamin C and bioflavonoids, vital for gum health, and are less acidic than our usual vitamin C go-to, citrus. Acid can be damaging to tooth enamel.
- Drink plenty of water to rinse the mouth of acid and bacteria (some

sources claim rinsing with water is as effective for bacteria removal as mouthwash is, but without the chemical nasties).

- Investigate oil pulling to help reduce plaque.
- Use a natural mouthwash, free of damaging and drying ingredients, such as alcohol, triclosan and sodium lauryl sulfate (SLS). Alternatives can be made using Himalayan salt, cooled boiled water and therapeutic food-grade essential oils. Have a look online for recipes.
- Use a natural toothpaste – there are a host of toxic chemicals in regular toothpaste, try SLS-free and paraben-free brands.



Your question has been answered by Naturopath, Gemma Hurditch, for CNM. For information on CNM training in a range of natural health therapies, visit www.naturopathy-uk.com

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