

Fluorides and Remineralizing Pastes

In case you find yourself in the category of being “cavity or decay” prone, your dental professional may prescribe fluoride or the new generation mineralizing pastes. Fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral found in the earth and its water supplies. It was discovered years ago by a dentist because of its ability to strengthen the enamel of the tooth. For the complete story visit the website below.

<http://www.nidcr.nih.gov/OralHealth/Topics/Fluoride/TheStoryofFluoridation.htm>

Most over-the-counter toothpastes also known as dentifrices contain fluoride. You can find some without. As a registered dental hygienist I always recommend using a paste with fluoride and sometimes recommend something stronger for my patient's with dental challenges.

There are prescription pastes that have a very high level of fluoride which can help people with weaker enamel. The fluoride makes the enamel stronger, therefore helping to prevent cavities. Fluoride also has an anti-bacterial effect that helps to kill germs and fight gingivitis. They can sometimes be obtained at your dental office or your dentist can write a prescription to be filled at your favorite pharmacy.

The newest cavity fighting pastes on the scene are called remineralizers. They have the advantage of helping to heal small cavities as they start to begin from the inside of the tooth in the softer center called the dentin, out to the enamel, the hard surface coating of the tooth. They can even remove what we call “white spot lesions”; the discoloration that occurs when plaque has damaged the enamel and caused it to turn white. They are not necessarily prescription; however, you have to obtain them from your dental office. You can also find one of the brands in a popular chewing gum at your convenience or drug store.

The other great advantage to high-fluoride and remineralizing pastes is that they help with dental sensitivity. That means more ice cream and cold water for you!

You will find instructions on how to use both below.

Prescription Fluoride Pastes

- Brush with a pea size amount of your new paste the same as you would with your regular over-the-counter paste. Brush for a minimum of 2 minutes and then spit. The important thing is to not rinse with water after brushing. Don't eat or drink for a half an hour.

Remineralizing Pastes

- Brush and floss your teeth as usual. Rub a pea size amount of the remineralizing paste all over your teeth and gums. That's it, don't spit or rinse, just leave it on your teeth for at least ½ hour before eating or drinking.