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In this issue of our newsletter:

As Seen on Dr. Oz...

Foods for a Camera-Ready Smile



The winter is fast-approaching, and with it comes seasonal feasts and holiday treats that can quickly veer your healthy nutritional habits off track. During this time of year, many people overindulge in rich foods, alcoholic drinks and late nights. And while many are worried about tipping the numbers on their scales, most people don't realize that unhealthy nutritional habits can wreak havoc on your oral health.

When your body is lacking certain nutrients, it can show up on your tongue, cause gum irritation, and lead to problems within the roots of your mouth. It's the body's way of telling you that you are not getting the proper nutrition it needs. To maintain a healthy mouth and a camera-ready smile this season, it is important to brush up on basic principles of a healthy diet. Check out the tips below taken from my book, *Smile! The Ultimate Guide to Achieving Smile Beauty*, to help you determine if your nutritional habits are on track.

All foods have a pH level. Low-pH foods have high acid levels, and are known as acidifying, and higher-pH foods are alkalizing or low in acid levels. The more acidifying your diet, the more loaded your mouth can get with harmful bacteria that can cause plaque and tooth decay. To strike the right balance, opt for a diet rich in alkalizing foods, and limit your intake of acidic foods. I tell my patients to generally aim for a "75:25 ratio" in their diet (75% alkalizing foods and 25% acidifying foods). Here are some easy ways to adjust your holiday menu:



1. Stick to “smile-friendly” vegetables, such as beets, broccoli, carrots, celery, eggplant, mushrooms, tomatoes and green beans. Limit dishes prepared with potatoes, squash, and corn, which are known to be acidifying, and can contribute to increased bacteria in the mouth.



2. Got a sweet-tooth? Reach for fresh fruit, such as apples, bananas, oranges, grapes, peaches, strawberries, even dark chocolate, which are all alkalizing. Avoid canned or glazed fruits, which can be acidifying and also high in sugar, which can lead to plaque build-up.



3. Eat almonds, flaxseed and pumpkin seeds, which are all healthy, alkalizing nuts to enjoy. Limit your intake of cashews, peanuts, pecans and walnuts, as these nuts can be challenging for your teeth since they have high acid levels.



4. Enjoy fresh and unsweetened fruit juices, regular and herbal teas, vegetable juices, and of course, plenty of water. Limit your alcohol intake and avoid soda, which is one of the biggest offenders today for tooth decay.

You can readjust the balance your mouth's pH level by limiting yourself to only alkalinizing foods for a few days. Also try taking a multivitamin, cutting down on your animal-protein intake, avoid yo-yo dieting, substituting sugar/sugar alternatives with stevia (the only alkalinizing sweetener), and of course, always practice good oral



hygiene.

For your better health!

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