



Bite

# Word of mouth

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Featured

## Eat your way to healthier teeth

We all know that sugar and acid are number one enemies when it comes to dental decay and erosion, but what about foods that promote good oral health? Recently there has been a lot of research into foods that contain compounds with anti-bacterial action.

### Herbs and spices add more than extra flavour

Herbs and spices have been used as natural food preservatives for centuries—long before refrigeration and other methods of food storage were invented. It's all thanks to phenolic and aldehyde compounds that are naturally present in cinnamon, cloves, sage, thyme and rosemary. Such antibacterial properties that have kept food from spoiling can also exhibit antibacterial effects on oral microbes'.<sup>1</sup>

### Piquant flavours

Foods that pack a punch of flavour such as garlic, onion, mustard and horseradish have powerful phytochemicals that help the plant to protect themselves from pests and diseases. We can also benefit from their properties by incorporating them into the foods we eat. The



active components in garlic (called allicin) is particularly potent and has been shown to kill gram-positive and gram-negative bacteria. Just keep in mind that those anti-bacterial phytochemicals also contain sulphur compounds that can be responsible for bad breath.<sup>2</sup>

### Tea or coffee?

Sorry coffee lovers but tea wins by a long shot in its anti-caries properties (providing that you don't add sugar). It is lower in caffeine that can cause dry mouth, has fluoride present naturally plus the well-documented anti-bacterial properties of tannins that give black tea that beautiful deep red hue. Green tea goes a step further and in addition to anti-decay properties will also give you a fresher breath thanks to the high concentration of polyphenols.

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### This month...

*Time is marching on...it's March already!*

*How great would it be if everything we ate did the job of keeping our teeth and gums healthy? Unfortunately not all of it can but you'll be surprised that some of it does! There are limitations and we cover those in our feature article. Look out for some encouraging news for diabetics in this article too!*

*Kat talks about the hot topic of tongue cleaning—should you, shouldn't you? Read Healthy Hygiene Tips to learn more.*

*Lastly, we have some good news in the form of a blast from the past. Check out the Team section to see who's back!*

Dr Simon Franks





References:

1. <http://www.hi-tm.com/Documents/Spices.html>
2. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19734685>
3. <http://www.diuq.edu.au/turmeric-and-type-2-diabetes>
4. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26329948>

**Golden spice**

Turmeric has been used in eastern cuisine for centuries to add flavour and give food a beautiful golden hue. It also has been used in traditional medicine as an anti-bacterial and its use has been backed up by scientific research. As well as killing bacteria it's also been proven to have anti-inflammatory properties and has been recommended as a supplement to sufferers of osteoarthritis and

type 2 diabetes. Researchers at the University of Queensland found that curcumin (an active compound in turmeric) acts as a specific blocker of the inflammatory signals that arise in diabetes. Watch this space as researchers are currently developing an anti-diabetic treatment derived from turmeric that can be combined with current treatments.<sup>3/4</sup>

One point to mention is that tannins (in tea) and turmeric can cause surface staining on your teeth. Here at Bite Dental, we're happy to discuss how you can manage this while still enjoying a healthy and varied diet.



*Random pic of cute baby animals to make you smile!*

**Healthy Hygiene Hints**

**Have you ever tried cleaning your tongue?**

Sometimes brushing and flossing alone won't give you a super fresh feeling, that is when you should look into cleaning your tongue as well. The tongue can harbour lots of bacteria that can give you bad breath and even contribute to dental decay.

There are plenty of devices on the market to do the job. You can either get a toothbrush with a built-in tongue cleaner, get a specially designed tongue scraper or buy an attachment for your electric toothbrush. Start cleaning your tongue from the back working in long sweeping motions towards the tip, applying gentle pressure.

When you are done have a good rinse with water or alcohol-free mouthwash to remove loosened-up film.

**Kat**



Celebrate everyday heros. Let us know if you have a cause you'd like us to shout about.

**Team**

**Good news—she's back!**

This month we have some very good news—our beloved dental assistant Stacey is back! She had a six month break from the dental industry before returning to Bite Dental. The whole team is very excited to work with her again as she brings a wealth of knowledge as well as her warm and caring personality.

