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We LOVE our patients!
If you have family or friends who can benefit from our services, we would love to meet them!



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The Smile Line

From DeLurgio and Blom Orthodontics

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SOFT DRINKS AND BRACES: A Destructive Combination

Many of us love to sip on a sweet and bubbly soft drink every once in a while, but if you wear braces or other orthodontic appliances, that sweet treat can turn into big trouble. Like it or not, soft drinks are your braces' — and your teeth's — worst enemy.

Why are soft drinks so bad for teeth, braces, and orthodontic appliances? Beverages like soda, energy drinks, sports drinks, and juice contain acid and sugar, which make for a volatile combination. On its own, sugar doesn't do much damage. It's the bacteria that eats the sugar and leaves behind acidic waste material — dental plaque — that causes damage. We'll come back to that in a moment. First and foremost, however, is the acid.

Soft drinks are highly acidic. Look at any soft drink label, and you'll see ingredients like citric acid and phosphoric acid. These are the two most common forms of acid present in soft drinks, but there are plenty more. These acids interact with the top layer of your tooth — the enamel. Over time, the acid wears away at your enamel, pulling away important minerals such as calcium. This is called decalcification, and it can make

your teeth more susceptible to cavities and tooth decay. And once enamel is worn away, it's gone for good.



Working together, acid and sugar can serve a one-two punch against the health of your teeth. First, the acid wears down your enamel. Then, the bacteria consume the sugars, along with starches, to produce acidic dental plaque. The plaque builds up on the surface

of your teeth as a thin film. Over time, if the film isn't removed by daily brushing, flossing, and rinsing, the decalcification will worsen. You may end up with cavities and gum disease.

When you wear braces, aligners, retainers, or other orthodontic appliances, keeping your teeth clean can be challenging. It can take a little extra effort to remove plaque. If you don't take the time to properly clean your teeth after the braces are removed, the results will be disheartening. Patients often notice white "stains" around where their brackets adhered to the tooth. These "stains" are the result of decalcification — where the tooth enamel has worn away — and it's permanent.

If you wear aligners, the damage can be more significant. If sugary or acidic liquid gets into an aligner, the acid will erode and potentially destroy teeth. When this happens, extensive (and expensive) restoration is needed.

What can you do to protect your teeth? The best thing you can do is avoid soft drinks altogether. Avoiding soft drinks during orthodontic treatment is especially crucial. Instead, stick to always-reliable water. Milk also makes a great and nutritious alternative to acidic soft drinks. Because they are acidic, soft drinks have a low pH value. The lower the value, the more acidic the substance. Coca-Cola, for example has a pH value of 2.6. Compare that to water which has a pH value of 7 (which means it's neutral) and battery acid, which has a pH value of 1. On the other side of the spectrum, there are bases (such as baking soda, which has a pH value of 9.5). Tooth enamel starts to dissolve at a pH value of 5.5.

Just be responsible. Realistically, you may still have a soft drink every now and again. If you do have a soft drink, the American Association of Orthodontists recommend that you drink through a straw, drink quickly (don't sip), and brush as soon as possible after drinking (or rinse your mouth with water if brushing isn't possible).

As always, brush and floss as usual — twice a day or more if your dentist or orthodontist recommends. Yes, brushing and flossing can be a little more challenging with braces, but your orthodontist can show you the best techniques you can use at home to keep your teeth looking fantastic every step of the way!

Liquids (including test drinks*)	pH
Hydrochloric acid**	0.0
Battery acid**	1.0
Stomach acid**	1.5
Coca-Cola (regular)	2.60
Pepsi (regular)	2.62
Coca-Cola (diet)	2.62
Lemonade (Minute Maid)	2.63
Powerade (Mountain Berry Blast)	2.67
Powerade (Fruit Punch)	2.67
Powerade Zero (Strawberry)	2.72
Hawaiian Punch (Fruit Juicy Red)	2.82
Powerade Zero (Grape)	2.84
5-Hour Energy (Pomegranate)	2.91
Pepsi (diet)	2.97
Dr. Pepper (regular)	2.98
Gatorade (Orange)	2.99
Gatorade (Fruit Punch)	3.03
Propel (Lemon)	3.08
Propel (Black Cherry)	3.10
Sunkist (regular)	3.13
Capri Sun (Red Berry)	3.19
Dr. Pepper (diet)	3.22
Sprite (regular)	3.26
Mountain Dew (regular)	3.34
7-Up (regular)	3.35
Sprite Zero	3.40
Mountain Dew (diet)	3.42
Red Bull Energy Drink (main flavor)	3.50
Sunkist (diet)	3.54
Monster Energy (regular)	3.59
7-Up (diet)	3.64
Apple Juice (Mott's)	3.75
Orange Juice (Tropicana - no pulp)	3.93
Tomato Juice (Campbell's)	4.12
Tea (Gold Peak - unsweetened)	4.25
A&W Root Beer (regular)	4.43
A&W Root Beer (diet)	4.65
Coffee (black, freshly brewed)	6.12
Milk (Prairie Farms 2%)	6.70
Pure water** (neutral)	7.00

* pH testing of 36 soft drinks was commissioned by the American Association of Orthodontists and performed by St. Louis Testing Laboratories.

** chemistry.about.com

*** U.S. National Library of Medicine

PATIENT OF THE MONTH



22 MONTHS
Gabrielle S.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

to those who referred a new patient or posted a review!

Jesus G.	Adriana I.	Michelle M.
Mindy A.	Jamie L.	Shannon D.
Beth A.	Martin O.	Marci E.
William P.	Thomas B.	Gina K.
Ashley S.	Tracey B.	Pat H.
	Caryn M.	

FROM OUR Patients ...

"My experience was tough, but I got through it. This treatment changed my life by giving me a nicer, newer, better smile!"

— Gabrielle S.



-Dr. DeLurgio

4 Natural Remedies to Soothe a Sunburn

It happens to the best of us. We're out enjoying the summer weather and forget to put on enough sunscreen. By the end of the day, we find ourselves more cooked than a well-done hamburger.

That's the bad news. The good news is that you probably have things in your home right now that can soothe the sunburn and help it heal. Here are four of the best kitchen staples and what they do to help your sunburn.

COLD WATER

It might not be the most exciting or exotic choice, but applying cold water against the burn several times per day, for about 10 to 15 minutes each time, will get the job done. Dip a washcloth or rag in the water and lay it against your skin to reduce irritation and relieve the inflammation.

OATMEAL

You can harness the power of oatmeal in a few ways. One option is to grind up a cup of oatmeal, pour it into a bathtub filled with water, and soak in the tub so that your burn is submerged. Alternatively, wrap dry oatmeal in an absorbent material like gauze and run cool water through it into a container. Soak a small cloth in the solution and apply it to your burn every few hours.

YOGURT

Yogurt, another great breakfast food, is excellent for absorbing the burning sensation from a sunburn, and eventually, after four or five applications, yogurt can eliminate the redness, too. It has another positive effect, which is preventing your skin from peeling. That's because it has lactic acid to dissolve dead skin

cells. Pat your skin dry after you've rinsed off the yogurt, and remember, if you take the yogurt route, make sure it's plain yogurt — not vanilla — and contains live cultures.

BAKING SODA

You should approach baking soda a little bit differently than the other choices. All you have to do is sprinkle the baking soda into a lukewarm bath, like you would do with the ground up oatmeal. Go ahead and soak in the water, but when you're done, don't dry your skin. This nontoxic solution will soothe the pain long after you're done soaking, as long as you let it.



THE HONEST "TOOTH" Real Facts About Braces

Braces. They're the two syllables almost every teen dreads to hear — second only to finals. Despite being extremely helpful, braces have developed a pretty bad rap. There's a lot of misinformation surrounding braces that makes them out to be a real pain, even outside of the mouth. Let's rescue the reputation of braces by debunking some of these longstanding myths.

MYTH: Only Kids and Teens Need Braces

FACT: Anyone can benefit from braces, regardless of age. Teeth shift as we get older, and there's a decent chance that perfect smile you enjoyed as a kid will change at some point in your life. More and more adults, and even celebrities, have been getting braces to fix their teeth. Faith Hill was seen sporting braces at the Grammys when she was 45.

MYTH: Braces are Only for Cosmetic Purposes

FACT: Braces are meant to straighten crooked teeth, and in doing so they can treat and prevent a number of other dental and health problems. Misaligned teeth can make it harder to eat certain foods, leading to gastrointestinal problems. You might also suffer from headaches, ear pain, and uneven teeth grinding. Crooked teeth can also make it challenging to brush properly and result in additional cavities or even gum disease.

MYTH: Braces Will Set off Metal Detectors or Get Me Struck by Lightning

FACT: Braces are made from titanium and other lightweight metals that metal detectors don't react to. Likewise, having a mouthful of braces doesn't mean you have to go inside when a thunderstorm rolls in. People with braces aren't more likely to get struck by lightning. According to National Geographic, those odds in any given year stay the same at 1 to 700,000. Even further, braces aren't going to rust or interfere with radio waves, either.

Celebrate Summer: Strange Holidays Your Kids Will Love

Are your kids bored during the dog days of summer? Don't stress. We've got the solution. There are plenty of theme-based activities in July to keep the kids satisfied. Here are four ways to fill in the time between summer vacation, fireworks-filled nights, and beyond:

CREATIVE ICE CREAM FLAVORS DAY

Creative Ice Cream Flavors Day is July 1. Get the kids together and come up with a creative homemade ice cream recipe or search for a unique one online. Go fancy, or go fun, with a recipe like the Cooking Channel's Sweet Actions' Trail Mix Ice Cream, which includes a vanilla ice cream base and trail mix ingredients like almonds, M&Ms, chocolate chips, peanuts, peanut butter chips, and raisins.

COMPLIMENT YOUR MIRROR DAY

Compliment Your Mirror Day falls on July 3. Why not use this opportunity to teach your kids about positive affirmations? A study by Carnegie Mellon University shows self-affirmation improves problem solving under stress. Positive affirmations can also help with analysis in difficult situations, like in test-taking environments. Finerminds, a site featuring personal

wellness information, offers more insight in an article called "How to Use Positive Affirmations to Enhance Your Child's Self-Esteem."

SIDEWALK EGG FRYING DAY

Most Americans know July 4 as Independence Day, but not many are aware that it's also Sidewalk Egg Frying Day! If you're looking to pass the time before the festivities on the Fourth, all you need is a carton of eggs and a hot sidewalk. Have a sidewalk-egg-frying competition to see who can get their egg to cook the fastest. Your kids can even try different types of sidewalks — like a nearby brick path, an outdoor basketball court, or even the side of a hot street.

TEDDY BEAR PICNIC DAY

Encourage your children's imaginations on July 10 by celebrating Teddy Bear Picnic Day. Make it an event to remember with a fancy picnic basket and a trip to the local park — or even a nearby lake. Real Simple has a picnic-packing checklist you can use for your prep. And, of course, don't forget your kids' favorite stuffed animals!

CAMPFIRE DINNER



A-camping we will go! A-camping we will go! This summer, go beyond hot dogs and try out this Scout special. You'll be more than prepared for your woodland adventures after this hot and simple meal.

INGREDIENTS

- 1/3-1/2 pound hamburger
- 2-3 onion slices, to taste
- 1 cup potato slices
- 1 whole carrot, sliced
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon butter or margarine
- Salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Lay down a sheet of heavy-duty tin foil.
2. Put the onion down first. Cover with hamburger, then layer on the sliced potatoes and carrots.
3. Pour the Worcestershire sauce on top, then sprinkle on the salt and pepper. Add butter last.
4. Fold the tin foil to make a closed packet, and carefully place the packet in the campfire coals.
5. Cook for approximately 30 minutes, rotating the packet 180 degrees halfway through.
6. When finished, let sit for 2 to 3 minutes and enjoy.