



HealthyPeople·Dental

7 VITAMINS & MINERALS YOUR MOUTH NEEDS

Want healthy teeth and gums? Make sure your diet features these key ingredients. These nutritional building blocks are essential for your dental health.

CALCIUM

No surprises here — calcium is well known as a friend for teeth. Calcium helps harden your enamel and strengthen your jawbone.

What to eat: In addition to milk, good sources of calcium include cheese, yogurt, broccoli and salmon.

VITAMIN D

Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium while boosting bone mineral density, so it's crucial to get an adequate amount of vitamin D to get the most out of your calcium intake.

What to eat: Your body naturally makes vitamin D when it's exposed to sunlight, but the vitamin can also be found in fatty fish, canned tuna and Portobello mushrooms. You can also look for foods and drinks that have been fortified with vitamin D, such as milk, orange juice and cereal.

POTASSIUM

Potassium works with magnesium to prevent blood from becoming too acidic, which can leach calcium from your bones and teeth.

What to eat: Bananas are well known sources of potassium, but they're not alone. Other fruits and vegetables with high levels of the mineral include lima beans, tomatoes, Swiss chard, potatoes, sweet potatoes, avocados and prunes.

PHOSPHORUS

Phosphorus supports calcium in building strong bones and teeth.

What to eat: Luckily, phosphorus is found in a wide range of foods. Rich sources of the mineral include seafood, such as scallops, sardines, cod, shrimp, tuna and salmon. If you're looking to get your phosphorus from plant-based foods, consider soybeans, lentils and pumpkin seeds. You can also find phosphorus in beef, pork and cheese.

VITAMIN K

This vitamin helps your body produce osteocalcin, a protein that supports bone strength. A vitamin K deficiency can slow down your body's healing process and make you more likely to bleed.

What to eat: Chowing down on leafy greens, such as kale, collards and spinach,

can help you increase your vitamin K quota. Other great sources include parsley, broccoli and Brussel sprouts.

VITAMIN C

Vitamin C strengthens your gums and the soft tissue in your mouth. It can protect against gingivitis, the early stage of gum disease, and can prevent your teeth from loosening.

What to eat: You probably already know that citrus fruits are rich in vitamin C, but you can also find it in potatoes and leafy greens.

VITAMIN A

This vitamin helps keep mucous membranes healthy. It prevents dry mouth and helps your mouth heal quickly.

What to eat: For strong gums and teeth, load up on fish, egg yolks and liver. You can also find it in leafy green vegetables like spinach, kale and collard greens, or in orange-colored fruits and oranges: think apricots, cantaloupe, pumpkin, carrots and sweet potatoes. These fruits and veggies contain high levels of beta-carotene, which your body converts into vitamin A.

