Richmond Road Dental Information Sheet

Erosion

Dental erosion is the loss of tooth enamel and other tooth structures due to raised acid levels in the mouth. This is different to dental decay which is caused by bacteria in the mouth turning sugar into acid. As tooth structure is eroded tooth weakness, pain and sensitivity can occur.

Before Restoration

After Restoration

Signs that your teeth are eroding

- Sensitivity
- Tiny chips or sharp edges
- The teeth look a bit clear in colour
- Often wear is not visible as it is on the back of your teeth as seen here

What raises our acid levels?

- Frequent intake of soft drinks (Cola drinks and lemonade are the worst), sports drinks, citrus fruits, lemon juice or water with lemon juice added, and other fruit juices
- Some medications such as chewable Vitamin C tablets and some cough syrups are acidic
- Low salivary flow which can be caused by smoking, medications or medical conditions such as diabetes, Sjogren's syndrome
- Exercise dehydration
- Gastric reflux eg: pregnancy, bulimia, oesophageal hernia, GORD

Before Restoration

After Restoration

Treatment for Erosion

- The teeth can be strengthened by bonding resin over the eroded areas. This will protect them from further wear and strengthen remaining tooth structure.

Caring for your teeth

- Avoid dietary acids or at least restrict them. Limit acidic drinks to mealtimes and use a drinking straw
- If you consume acidic food, drink a glass of water immediately afterwards or at least rinse your mouth out with water
- **Do not** brush your teeth immediately after acid exposure as this will remove the surface of the teeth that have been eroded. Delay brushing your teeth for at least 40 minutes to give saliva time to help stabilise the tooth enamel
- Drink at least two litres of water per day to avoid dehydration
- Chewing sugarless gum after meals for 20 minutes will stimulate salivary flow
- For athletes, rehydrate with water after exercise
- Brush twice daily using a soft toothbrush and non abrasive toothpaste
- Maintain regular visits to your dentist