Xylitol is a sugar substitute that has shown some remarkable benefits for people at risk for cavities.

**Xylitol, how is that a good thing?**

- This sugar substitute can be safely ingested as a sweetener in drinks, gums and toothpastes, to name a few.
- Cavities are formed as a result of bacteria making acids from the carbohydrates you eat (sugars, starches, etc.). The bacteria tries to turn the Xylitol into acid, but in the process, becomes unable to turn sugars into acid permanently.
- Regular use of xylitol effectively renders bad bacteria in your mouth harmless, putting you at less risk for cavities!

**What is xylitol?**

Xylitol is naturally occurring and comes from the fiber in fruits, berries, oats, vegetables, and even corn husks. It is not calorie-free, but has 2/3 of the calories of table sugar.

Originally used as a sweetener for diabetics, studies in the 1970's discovered the oral health benefits. Now, it can be found in chewing gums, toothpastes, mouthwashes, and other products.

**Any problems with using xylitol?**

You can’t bake with it! It doesn’t crystallize like sugar, so it is not good for cooking.

People with sensitive stomachs should use xylitol moderately.

Xylitol is bad for dogs, so keep it away from Fido.

**Other great news about Xylitol:**

Studies of new and expecting mothers who chewed xylitol-sweetened gum found that their children had MUCH fewer cavities up to age 6!


For patients with dry mouth, hard candies or gums with xylitol provide increased saliva and cavity prevention. Try Biotene gum or mouthwash. Also, www.drjohns.com, has hard candies, or OraMoist patche.

**Prevention**

Preventing cavities and damage to your teeth should be your highest priority for your oral health. At Pacific Hills Dental, we believe in prevention and can help you reduce your risk for cavities and other oral health problems.

If you would like to discuss Xylitol or any other issue, please contact us and we will be glad to help.

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