

Sensitivity

Your teeth appear to be hypersensitive. There are several causes of tooth sensitivity and this information may help you control this.

The main causes are:

1. Decay or faulty fillings
2. Gum recession
3. Tooth grinding
4. Acid attack of teeth

A thorough check up can help to diagnose which of these causes are applicable to you.

DECAY OR FAULTY FILLINGS

These would have to be corrected to deal with any sensitivity problems. Large, deep amalgam fillings can also cause sensitivity and may need replacing. If there are cracks in the tooth, it may indicate a need for a crown on the tooth.

GUM RECESSION

The main causes of this are brushing too hard, using a brush that is too hard or periodontal disease. Using only a soft brush and brushing in gentle circles near the gum will prevent further gum recession. Often diet will influence the degree of sensitivity. Basically, anything acidic will cause sensitivity in the area of recession. Either eliminating this from your diet or rinsing with water afterwards could help to decrease the symptoms. Do not brush your teeth straight away after eating or drinking something acidic as this can make it worse. Examples of acidic food and drinks are lemons, grapefruits and citrus fruit and juice, vinegar, salad dressings, wine, champagne, pineapples, cola drinks (normal and diet), some throat lozenges and sports drinks.

Using Sensodyne toothpaste in conjunction with the above may help

TOOTH GRINDING

This causes the enamel to wear off the tooth and can expose the sensitive dentine. As this is usually known to occur at night when you are asleep, you may need to wear an occlusal splint to minimise any more damage. An occlusal splint is an acrylic "plate" like appliance which is custom made to fit your mouth. It "clips" onto your top teeth and you wear it during sleeping hours. It ultimately stops any more enamel from being eroded.

ACID ATTACK OF TEETH

There are two main types :internal and external.

Internal acid would be coming from the stomach. Causes include regurgitation, hiatus hernia or conditions such as anorexia or bulimia.

External causes may be food and drink (see gum recession), environmental factors eg: work conditions may be acidic and end up in the mouth.

These causes would need special individual assessment.