

Dental caries

Dental caries is one of the most common oral health problems and infectious diseases. Caries can be transmitted from parent to child. Carious lesions occur when the bacteria in the mouth convert sugars and carbohydrates into acids, which then damage the tooth enamel. These bacteria are present in the plaque on the tooth surface.

The Development and Symptoms of Carious Lesions

Caries starts from small microscopic damages in the tooth enamel, which can deepen, leading to tooth sensitivity, chipping, root canal treatment, or even tooth loss. Caries does not always cause symptoms, especially in the early stages. Carious lesions may appear as white or darker areas on the surfaces of the teeth. As caries progresses deeper into the tooth pulp, symptoms may include a throbbing ache, sensitivity to heat, and tenderness to tapping.



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Factors Increasing the Risk of Caries:

- Foods and beverages:
 - Sweets, sugary snacks, and chips
 - Sugared soft drinks, juices, and other beverages
 - Carbohydrate-rich foods that stick to the teeth
- Decreased saliva secretion or quality – dry mouth:
 - Due to certain diseases
 - Due to certain medications

- Other factors:
 - Frequent acid attacks (more than 5 - 6 times a day)
 - Poor oral hygiene
 - Insufficient fluoride intake

Prevention and Treatment of Caries Risk

Reducing the risk of caries can protect your teeth:

- Use fluoride toothpaste at least twice a day for 2 minutes.
- Clean between your teeth daily.
- Use xylitol products after meals.
- Avoid sugary snacks and limit them to meal times.
- Use water as a drink for thirst.

If carious lesions are present, treatment may include:

- Primarily, guidance and motivation for the patient's self-care.
- Arrestment treatment if the lesion has not yet progressed too deeply.
- Filling treatment if the progression of the lesion cannot be stopped.
- Root canal treatment if caries has reached the tooth pulp.
- Tooth extraction if the tooth is no longer restorable.
- A prosthetic crown if the tooth structure is significantly damaged.

Caries does not always cause symptoms, especially in the early stages, so regular check-ups are important for its detection and timely treatment initiation.

Video (FIN): [Proper brushing and cleaning between teeth](http://www.qadental.com/puhdistus) [www.qadental.com/puhdistus]