

All I Want For Christmas Is My Two Front Teeth - Seasonal Food Favorites Can Take Their Toll On Both Teeth And Enamel

Dr. Fred Peck, DDS Offers Some Healthy Substitutions

Cincinnati, Ohio -- November 15, 2012 -- Many of us try to be calorie conscious throughout the holiday season, as the constant snacking and consumption of alcoholic beverages at get-togethers during this festive season can really add up, but what many holiday revelers don't often realize is how hard many of these seasonal favorites can be on our teeth.

According to Dr. Fred Peck, D.D.S., "There are many foods and beverages that are primarily consumed during the holiday season, and quite a few of these can be particularly hard on the teeth. Continual snacking on these foods over a 6 or 8 week period can lead to quite a few problems including decay and cracked teeth."

Says Peck, "One of most popular holiday treats is the candy cane. Candy canes have a very high sugar content, and constant nibbling on them can cause the sugar tend to stick to your teeth, causing bacteria to thrive. This build up of sugar can lead to both plaque and tooth decay. Additionally, candy canes are meant to be slowly savored so that you enjoy the flavor until the piece fully dissolves in your mouth. Unfortunately, most people are tempted to bite into a candy cane, and the teeth are not designed to crush hard candy. Biting in the candy cane butts undue pressure on your teeth that can cause them to crack, chip or fracture.

Whether you love it or hate it, Aunt Martha's fruitcake is almost always guaranteed to make an appearance at your favorite

holiday party. A typical fruitcake can contain oranges, lemons, pears, apples, cherries and nuts. And while these ingredients are a great way to consume a good deal of fiber, iron, protein and vitamin C, the pieces of fruit are sticky and coated with sugar, also encouraging tooth decay. Hard nuts, in particular, are often the culprit behind many chipped teeth, creating the need for a crown or restoration.

Eggnog is another holiday favorite, which is an excellent source of calcium, Vitamin A and protein. But in addition to eggs and milk, it is extremely high in calories, filled with sugar, and often topped with whipped cream, which can further increase the risk of tooth decay.

Wine consumption is at its peak from Thanksgiving to New Years. Red and white wine are both highly acidic – potentially causing both tooth decay and gum disease. Consider drinking a glass of water after each glass of wine to rinse away the acidity. It can also have an added benefit of helping you stay hydrated so that you are less prone to a holiday hangover or headache the next day.

Gingerbread houses are a fun way to create family togetherness over the holidays. Ginger has many great medicinal properties, and can also help boost the immune system. But these creations are decorated with a substantial amount of both icing and candy. If you decide to eat your creation, the sugar can also attack your teeth and help contribute to decay.”

Peck offers up some guilt-free holiday treats, which partygoers can consume, which are lower in sugar content, and easier on the teeth. “Instead of eggnog, try natural hot apple cider, with no added sweeteners. Replace the fruitcake with an authentic pumpkin pie, softer and much easier to chew with no added

sugar. Sweet potatoes or yams topped with cinnamon or nutmeg are also a healthy way to satisfy a sweet tooth craving. Soft nuts such as cashews or macadamia nuts are heart healthy, taste great, and are not too hard on the teeth's enamel."

Peck adds, "Let's face it, we are all going to overindulge a bit too much over the holidays. My best advice is to eat sweets in moderation, make smart substitutions when you can, and don't snack on them continually. This will also reduce your caloric intake which is a win-win for all."

Dr. Fred Peck is a [third generation](#) general dentist serving the Cincinnati, Montgomery, Mason and Blue Ash, Ohio areas is committed to providing his patients with the latest [dental techniques](#) and [technology](#) available in dentistry today. That commitment begins with his patient's oral health and extends through cosmetic smile enhancements. For more information, visit www.pecksmiles.com