

Tea n' Teeth

By ACSH Staff — June 17, 2004

Another myth bites the dust. This one falls into the category of supposed facts that "everyone knows." What's the worst thing you can drink in terms of ruining your teeth? "Everyone knows" that's got to be colas, right? But recent preliminary research from the journal *General Dentistry* casts doubt on this truism.

Researchers exposed healthy tooth enamel (the protective outer layer of the teeth) to a variety of beverages for two weeks. They found that non-cola carbonated beverages and canned iced teas were particularly harmful. They suggested that the flavor additives, often organic acids like malic and tartaric acids, explained at least some of these results.

Of the non-colas, which was the least problematic soft drink for tooth enamel? Root beer likely because it contains the smallest amount of flavor additives. What if you can't stay away from the others? Then consume them with food, don't sip them over a long period of time (which prolongs the exposure), and rinse your mouth with water after you finish the soft drink.¹

¹Based on the article "Soda Attack" in the Summer 2004 issue of *Dentalnotes*, published by the Academy of General Dentistry (www.agd.org ^[1]).

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