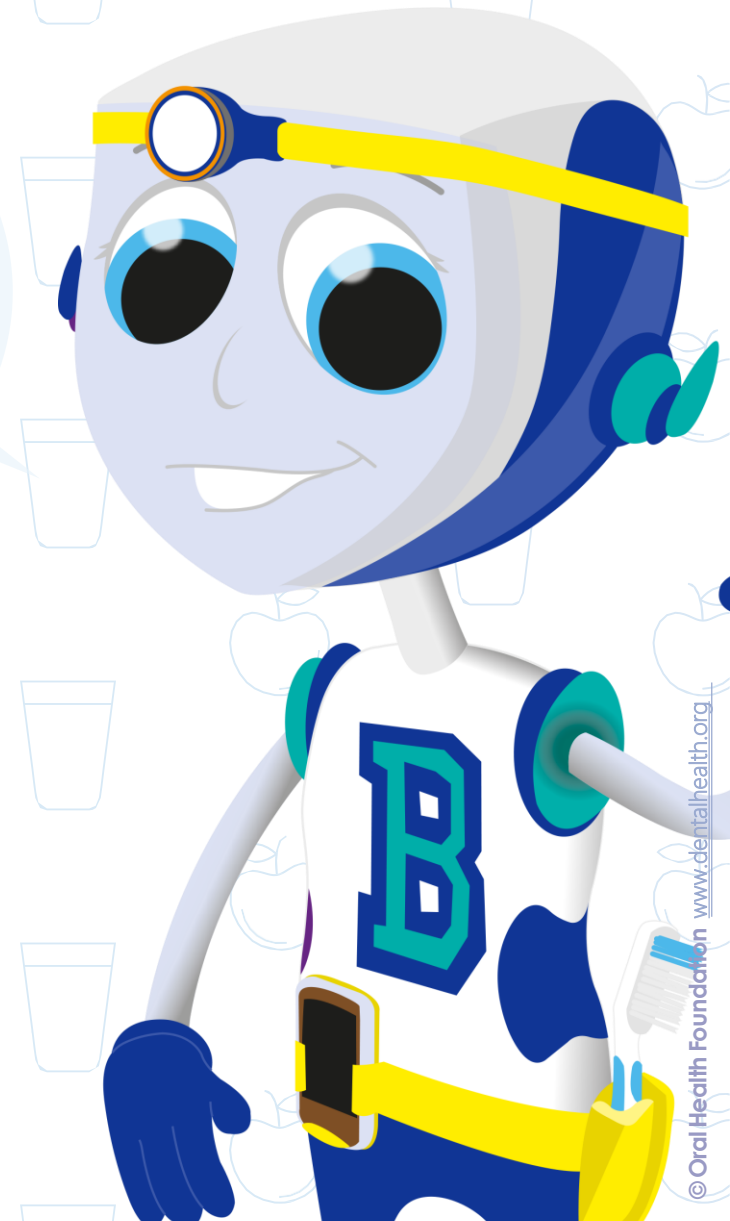
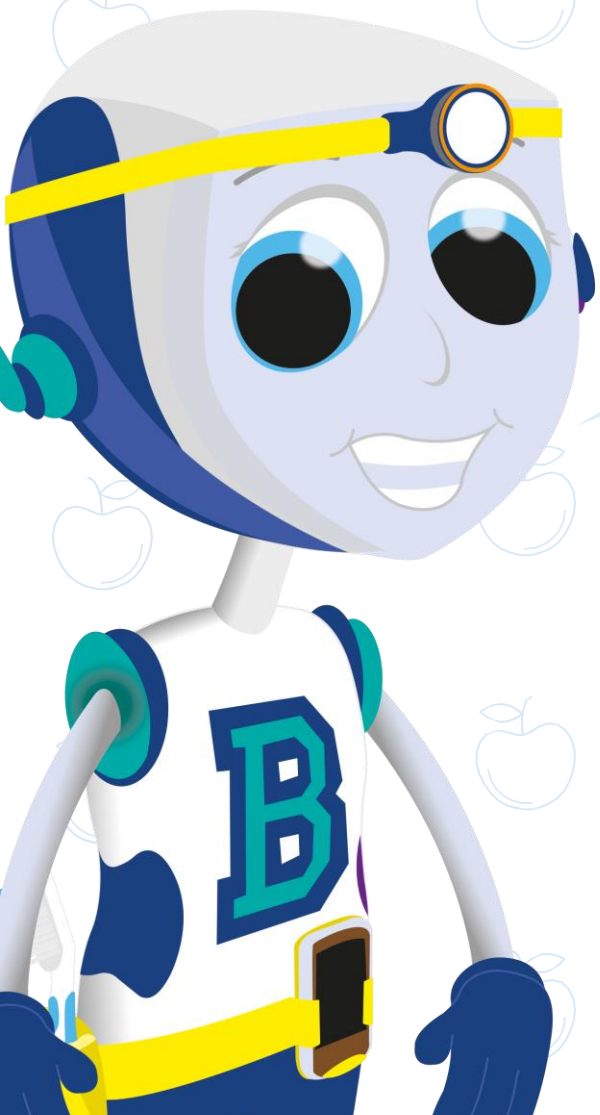




Sugar & Our Teeth

It's well known that foods and drinks that are high in sugar are bad for our teeth.





Why? Because the sugar that we eat and drink, reacts with the bad bacteria in our mouth. This forms plaque (the soft sticky stuff) on our teeth.



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This forms **plaque acids** and it is this acid that attacks the enamel on our teeth, causing **dental decay**.





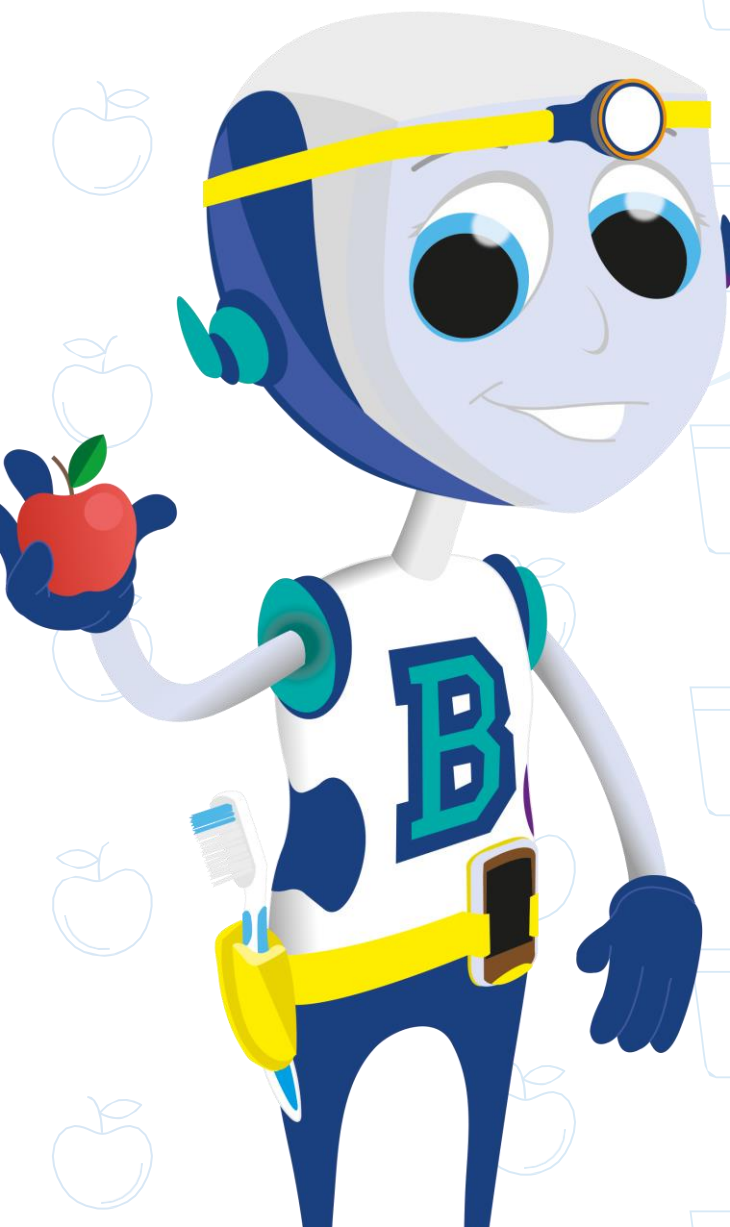
**So what happens in
our mouth when we
eat or drink?**

Our mouths are normally
pH 7 (Acid neutral).

How some everyday drinks may erode your teeth

	pH	Acidity Levels
Cola drinks	2.5	High
Carbonated orange	2.9	High
Grapefruit juice	3.2	High
White wine	3.7	Medium
Beer/bitter	3.9	Low
Lager	4.4	Low
Sparkling water	5.1	Low
Tap water	6.5-9.5	None





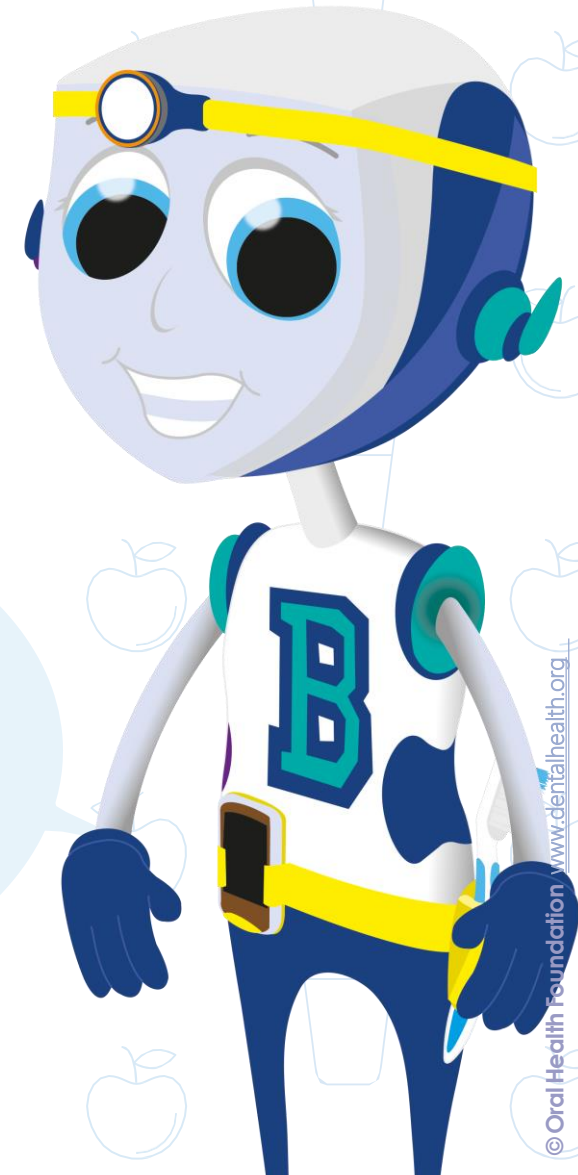
When we eat or drink anything, the bacteria in our mouths feed off the sugars and they release plaque acid.

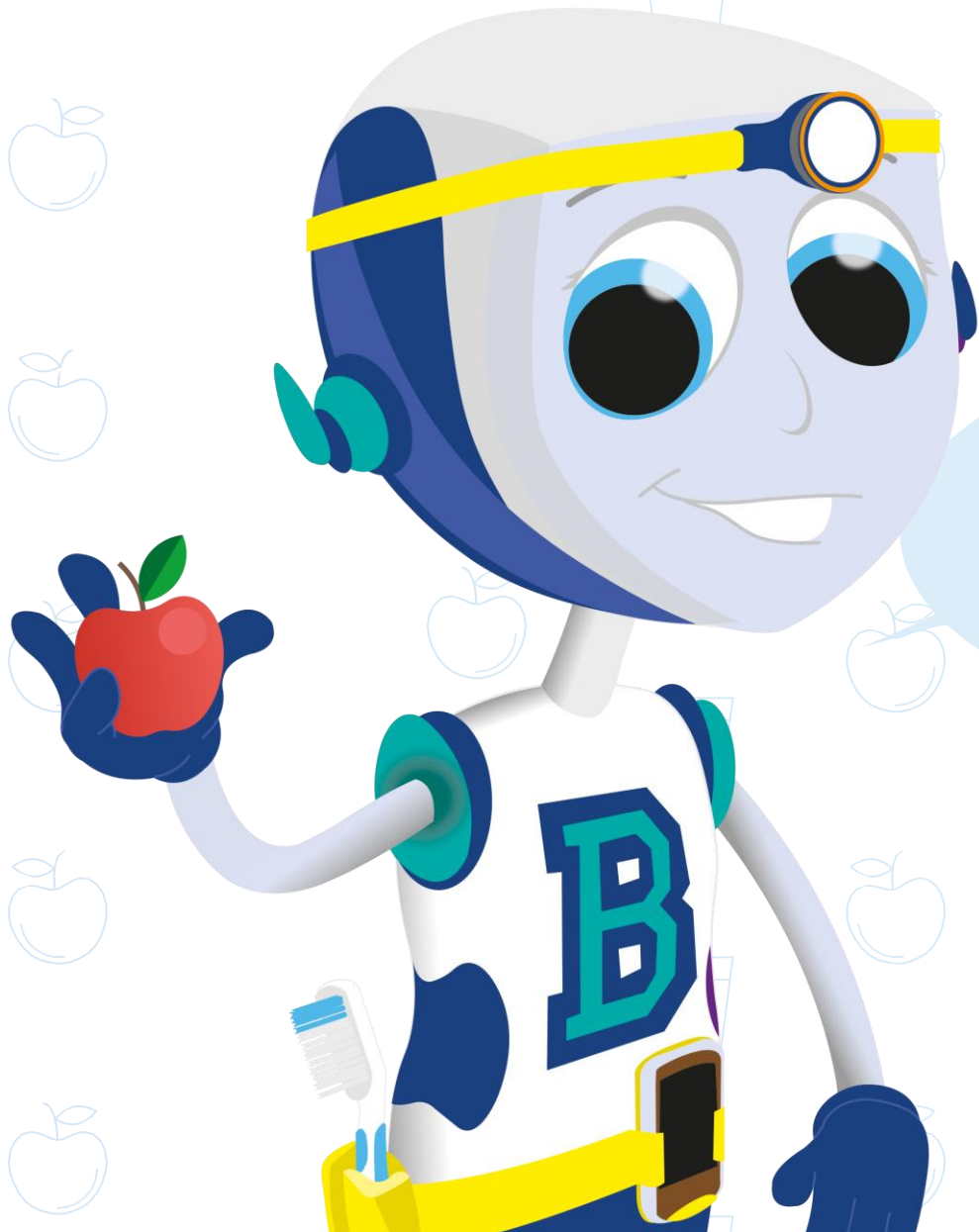
As we chew food we produce saliva which helps to neutralise the harmful acids and food away from the teeth. This happens every time we eat and drink.

To keep teeth healthy:
Eat a balanced diet of three
meals and one snack per day.
And use a fluoride
toothpaste as part of a good
toothbrushing routine.



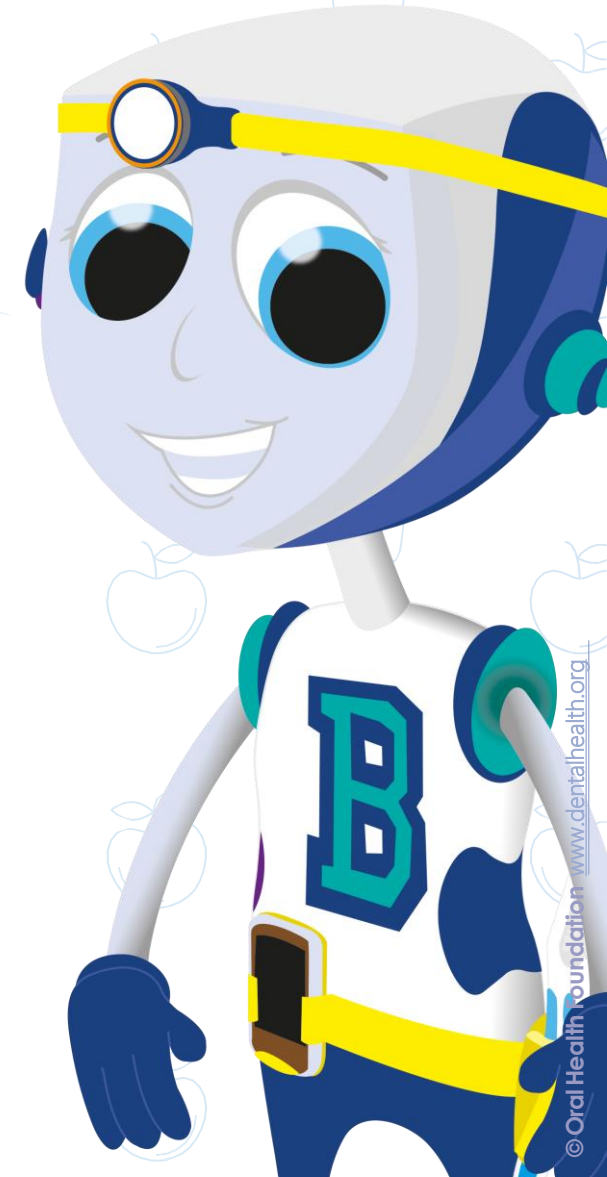
Regular visits to the
dentist will help to
keep your mouth
healthy and find any
problems.





**The problems start
when we snack.**

Constant snacking and sugary drinks between meals, means that teeth aren't getting a break from the acid. And this will lead to **tooth decay.**



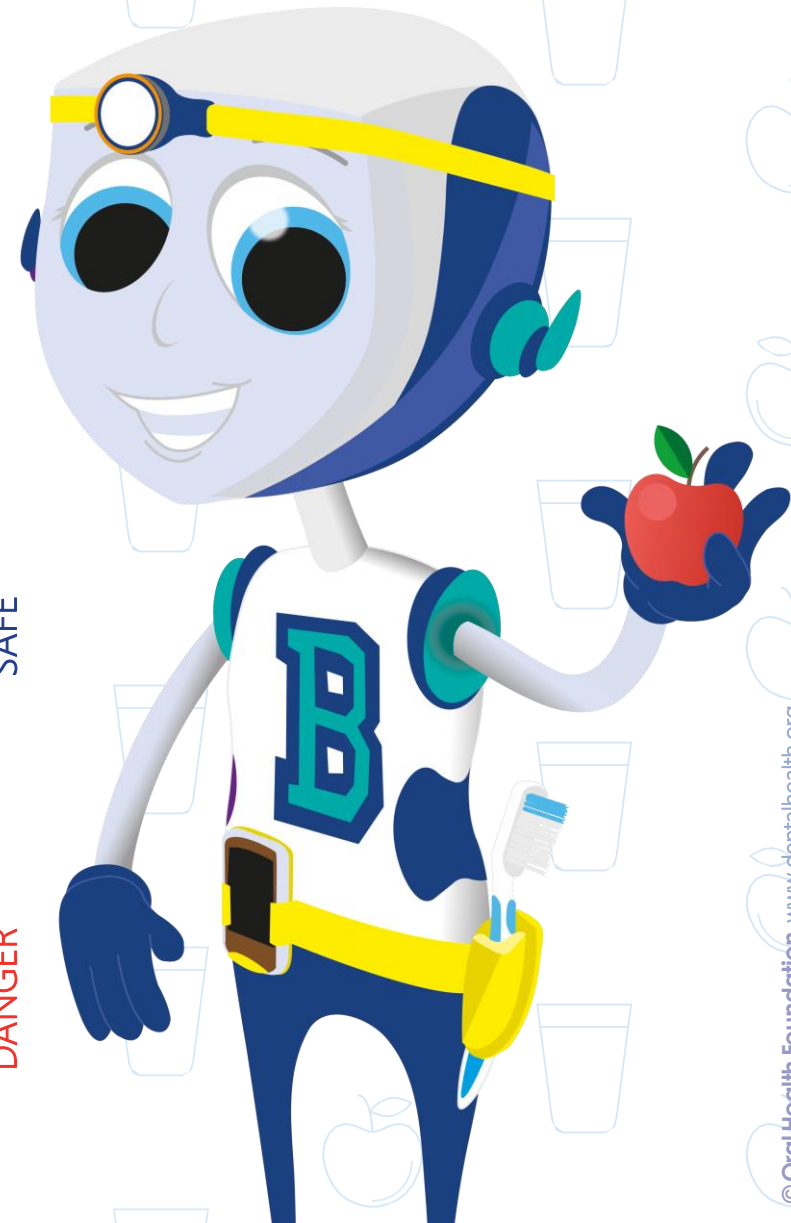
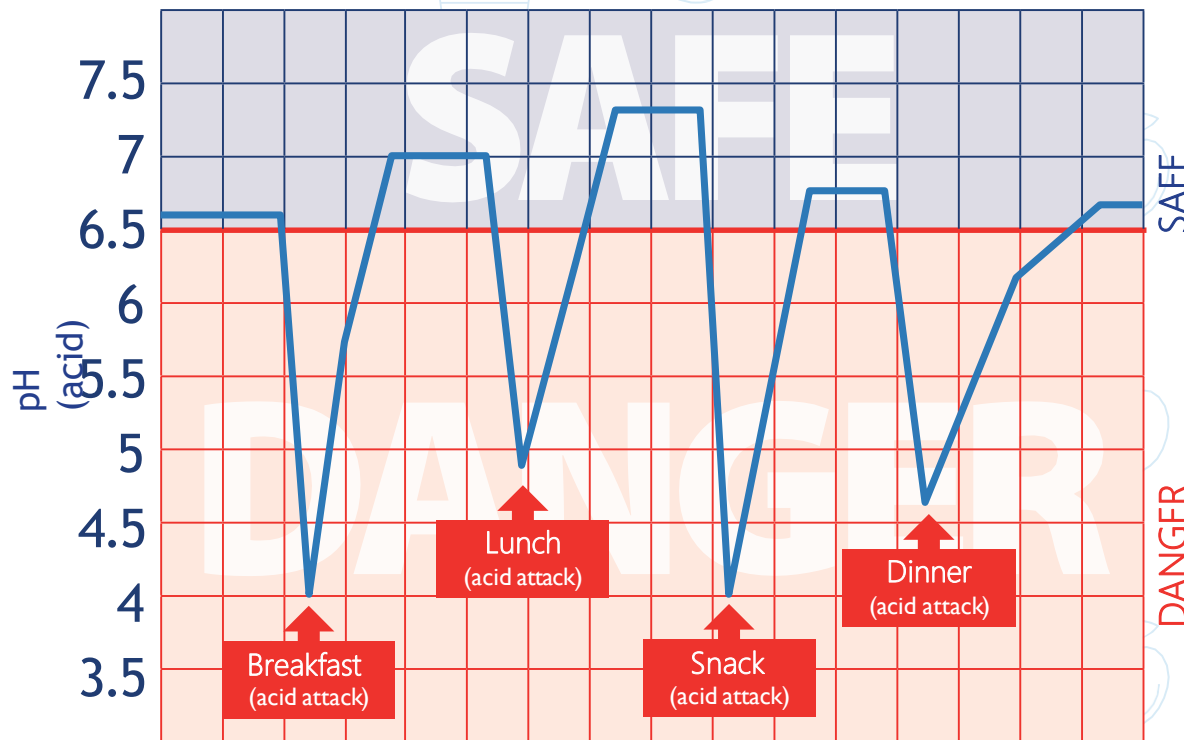


So if you must have sugary foods and drinks, try to have them at mealtimes rather than snacking on them.

If you do snack, then drink water or milk to help lower or dilute the acidity in the mouth.

This graph shows what happens to the acid in your mouth when you eat and drink.

The Stephan Curve





It's not just flavoured fizzy drinks and sweets that damage your teeth:



- **Dried fruit** – sticks to the teeth and is difficult to remove – best not as a snack.
- **Fruit juice** – again, sounds healthy but this is very acidic. Plain water is much healthier.
- **Cereal bars** – you may think these are healthy but are often packed with sugars and fruits so check the packaging.