



Cavities

Information in Easy Language

A cavity is a tooth disease.
It destroys the tooth.

How do cavities develop?

Cavities develop very slowly.
They can only develop:
If food particles and bacteria in your mouth remain
on your teeth for a long time.
If you don't brush your teeth regularly
or properly, for example.

Then plaque builds up in your mouth from food particles and saliva.
The plaque sticks to the teeth.
Bacteria in your mouth adhere to the plaque.

The plaque is yellowish.
It sticks very firmly to the teeth.
The bacteria in plaque feed on sugars
and food particles.
The bacteria produce acids from the sugars.

The acids dissolve the surface of the tooth.
The bacteria can enter the tooth.
They can destroy the tooth from the inside.
The result is a hole in the tooth.

Dentists can detect and treat cavities.
When cavities are discovered at an early stage,
this can prevent a hole from developing in the tooth.



How do you identify cavities?

Initially, a cavity is a white opaque spot on the tooth and difficult to detect.

The spot of a cavity on a tooth often turns brown-black.

Cavities are often invisible to the naked eye.

The dentist feels the tooth with a small hook.

They often wear special glasses.

Sometimes they also take x-rays of the teeth.

This lets them find cavities in hidden areas.

A tooth with cavities is sensitive to sweet or cold stuff.

If the hole in the tooth is deep, the tooth will hurt.

Then the cavity is at an advanced stage.

It often takes 1 to 2 years for a hole to form in a tooth.

Cavities can also occur in teeth that already have a filling, for example.

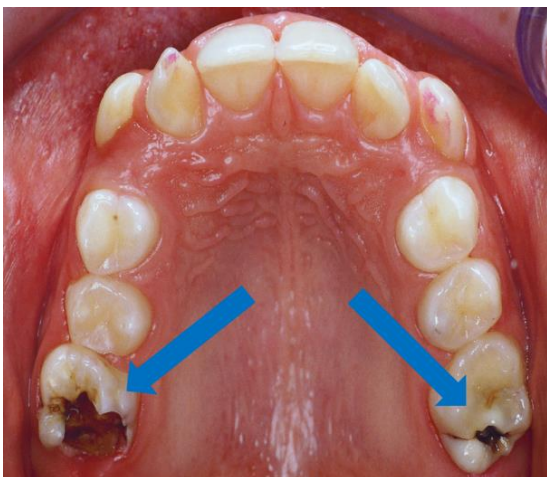


Photo: Stefan Zimmer

How can I protect myself against cavities?

Brushing teeth correctly

Plaque is removed when you brush your teeth.

Brush all the teeth in your mouth on all tooth surfaces.

Brush your teeth for at least 2 minutes
in the morning and evening after eating.

Use a manual
or electric toothbrush.

Use fluoride toothpaste to brush your teeth.

The fluoride helps strengthen teeth and protects against cavities.

Clean the interdental spaces.

These are the spaces between your teeth.

Clean them with:

- dental floss or
- small special brushes.

These special brushes are also called interdental brushes.



Photo: SOG



See your dentist regularly

Visit your dentist twice a year.

The check-up is covered by your health insurance.

Your dentist will examine:

- your mouth,
- your teeth and
- your gums.

Ask your dentist what you should pay attention to most when brushing your teeth.

Eat healthy diet

Avoid snacks and sugary drinks
such as cola and soda between meals.

Avoid foods high in sugar,
such as sweet snacks.

Rinse your mouth with water after eating.

If you cannot brush your teeth,
chew sugarless gum after eating.

Chewing gum produces saliva in the mouth.

Saliva rinses the teeth.

This helps your teeth clean themselves.





**Special
Olympics**
Deutschland



Who created this information sheet?

This information sheet is from
Special Olympics Germany, abbreviated: SOG.

SOG is the largest sports organization
for people with intellectual and multiple disabilities.

For the content of the text, SOG works together with the Working Group
on Dentistry for People with Disabilities or Special Medical Support
Needs (**A**rbeitsgemeinschaft **Z**ahnmedizin für **M**enschen mit
Behinderung
oder besonderem medizinischen Unterstützungsbedarf),
or, for short, AG ZMB.

The AG ZMB is a group of professional experts.
Their work is dedicated to improving the oral health
of people with disabilities.
The information on this sheet is reliable and up-to-date.

You will find more information on the topic of health in Easy Language
at: www.gesundheit-leicht-verstehen.de

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