

SENSITIVE TEETH – CAUSES AND TREATMENT



Sensitive teeth (dentinal hypersensitivity) can occur when gums pull away from your teeth at the gumline exposing the dentin layer of your tooth. Dentin is the softer tooth layer that lies beneath the hard enamel surface. Below the gumline dentin is not protected by the enamel that covers the part of the tooth you can see in your mouth. Once dentin is exposed, the microscopic pores called tubules that lead to the tooth nerve are left unprotected. Hot, cold and sometimes sweet or acidic foods can trigger sensitivity pain.



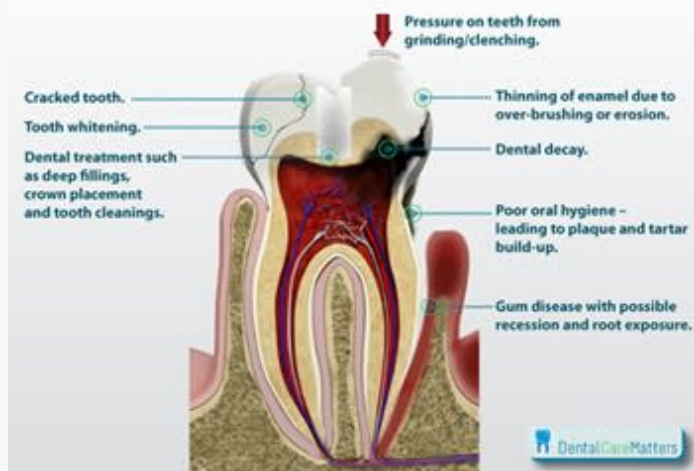
Why are my teeth sensitive?

There are several ways that dentin can become exposed leading to tooth sensitivity.

Common causes of sensitive teeth resulting from dentin exposure

- Gum recession due to gum disease
- Overaggressive brushing or brushing with a hard bristled toothbrush
- Too many acidic foods and beverages
- Teeth grinding
- Tooth decay or physical injury to the tooth
- Recent dental procedure

Common Causes of Sensitive Teeth



Always see your dental professional for tooth pain that is severe or consistent and lasts for more than a day or two, but if you have the sharp, shooting pains commonly felt with tooth sensitivity, use products that are designed to block the tubules and relieve the pain including toothpaste for sensitive teeth and gums.

What can I do to manage sensitive teeth?

With the many recent advancements in oral health technology, you might not have to accept sensitive teeth as a fact of life. There are a number of options for treatment of sensitive teeth:

- Brush and floss your teeth twice a day to prevent gum disease.
- Be sure to clean all parts of your mouth, including between teeth and along the gumline
- Brush gently and use a soft bristled electric toothbrush. This will help prevent overaggressive brushing and protect your enamel from being worn away
- Avoid acidic foods and drinks
- Use a toothpaste designed to help protect your teeth against sensitivity

While there are many effective over-the-counter methods of treatment for sensitive teeth, it's always a good idea to consult with your dental professional if you experience ongoing sensitivity as it could be a sign of more serious problems.