

#DM2002-21

“WHAT ARE CAVITIES?”

CAVITIES ARE A CONCERN FOR THE YOUNG AND OLD ALIKE. CAVITIES OR TOOTH DECAY OCCURS WHEN THE TOOTH ENAMEL IS DESTROYED.

THIS HAPPENS WHEN SUGARY AND STARCHY FOODS LIKE SODA, RAISINS, CANDY OR EVEN MILK, ARE FREQUENTLY LEFT ON THE TEETH.

BACTERIA THRIVES ON THESE FOODS AND PRODUCES ACID. OVERTIME, THE ACIDS MAY BREAK DOWN TOOTH ENAMEL, AND YOU'RE LEFT WITH A CAVITY.

AS YOU AGE, YOU NEED TO BE EXTRA CAUTIOUS ABOUT CAVITIES ON OTHER PARTS OF YOUR TEETH SUCH AS THE ROOTS. GUM RECESSION MAY BEGIN TO OCCUR AND THIS EXPOSES THE TOOTH ROOTS TO PLAQUE AND THEY TOO MAY BECOME DECAYED.

SINCE CAVITIES DON'T JUST HAPPEN OVER NIGHT, IT'S UP TO YOU TO STOP THE DECAY BEFORE IT STARTS. BRUSH YOUR TEETH TWICE DAILY WITH A FLUORIDE TOOTHPASTE, FLOSS OR USE AN INTERDENTAL CLEANER, LIMIT YOUR SNACKING AND EAT WELL-BALANCED MEALS.

ALSO, ASK YOUR DENTIST ABOUT DENTAL SEALANTS TO HELP PROTECT AGAINST TOOTH DECAY.

FOR THE ADA DENTAL MINUTE, I'M DR. MARIA LOPEZ HOWELL.