

HOW SMILE-FRIENDLY IS YOUR DIET?

What you eat can make a big difference to your teeth. Take our quiz to see how you score:

1 You're having dinner with friends. Which of these would you order?

- a) Pasta with tomato sauce
- b) Pasta with cheese sauce

Tooth-friendly choice: B
'Anything that will stain a white shirt will stain teeth,' says Dr Okoye (www.londonsmiling.com) – think tomato sauce, curry sauce, red wine, tea and coffee. However, the alkalinity of dairy products can help to protect teeth from acid erosion.

2 That same night out, what would you drink?

- a) Red wine
- b) White wine

Tooth-friendly choice: A
Yes, red wine can stain teeth, but it's still less damaging than white, say researchers at Germany's Johannes Gutenberg University. They found white wine destroys calcium on teeth – although eating cheese after a meal reduces this damage.

3 Not drinking? What do you choose then?

- a) Sparkling water

b) Lemonade or coke

Tooth-friendly choice: A
Research by Birmingham University found fizzy water is 100 times less erosive than sugary soda. A bad choice would be fruit-flavoured herbal tea – it's three times more erosive than orange juice, says University of Bristol research.

4 Which is your preferred treat?

- a) Jelly sweets
- b) Chocolate

Tooth-friendly choice: B
'It's not so much the quantity of sugar you eat that's bad for teeth, as the number of times you consume it,' says Dr Anjali Rajah of NW Smiles in London (www.nwsmiles.co.uk). You're more likely to snack on jelly sweets throughout the day, putting your teeth under a fresh attack every time.

5 What's your favourite vegetable?

- a) Celery
- b) Tomato

Tooth-friendly choice: A
Celery is high in cellulose, which helps to remove stains from your teeth. Tomato, though, is acidic, which contributes to tooth erosion.

6 Which of these do you put on salad?

- a) Mayonnaise
- b) Vinaigrette

Tooth-friendly choice: A
'Vinegar is very erosive,' says Professor Andrew Eder of the [London Tooth Wear Centre](http://www.restorative-dentistry.co.uk) (www.restorative-dentistry.co.uk). Adding acidic lemon to your dressing is even worse.

7 How much fluid do you drink in a day?

- a) Six to eight glasses
- b) Less than six glasses

Tooth-friendly choice: A
Dehydration is bad for teeth, as it dries the mouth, and saliva is needed to neutralise plaque acids. 'Drink water after a meal or chew sugar-free gum, which helps to replenish saliva,' says Dr Rajah.

8 In the morning, when do you brush your teeth?

- a) Before your breakfast fruit
- b) After your breakfast fruit

Tooth-friendly choice: A
'If you have something that softens tooth enamel, like orange juice, brushing your teeth straight after will make the enamel wear away faster,' says Professor Eder. Brush them before, or an hour afterwards.

