

Stop the Rot!

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Extraction of teeth when a child results in dental phobia !!!!

The rise in child dental extractions under general anaesthetic has reached nearly 43,000 in 2016-17 and is up from previous years. These children will probably be affected by the psychological trauma during the treatment under GA which in turn leads to a lifetime of fretfulness and anxiety about dental treatment. Having general anaesthetic and having your teeth ripped out has major consequences. The main ones before the procedure are pain, distress for child and parent, fear of the unknown, loss of control. After the procedure there is blood loss, pain after the procedure, distress. This experience results in fear of the dentist later in life, and in some circumstances dental phobia.

The principle cause of rotten teeth in young kids is sugar, which is found in fizzy drinks, sweets, chocolates, and processed foods, but most parents know this. Sugar is addictive and the scenario when I ask parents about why they give their kids sweets or chocolates is the



situation of the child playing up, and the best way for them to get the child to stop whinging or crying is to give them sugar in some form.

As well as rotten teeth, too much sugar increases the risk of diabetes, and the type II form of diabetes which is related to diet and lifestyle is increasing in kids. The lack of exercise and increased sugar intake are causing 1 in 3 kids to be overweight or obese in the UK. Sugar is the principle cause for all of these diseases. If sugar was a bacteria we would have found an antibiotic to kill it.

The case against sugar is multifactorial, from a dental point of view it starts with oral health education. At Cavendish Dental Practice we recently contacted the local schools to organize our oral health promotion team to visit the schools and also to talk to the parents of very young children at a coffee morning. We just recently arranged a Saturday kids registration day on March 3rd so that we could directly examine kids mouths and treat early the rotten teeth, before it is too late. In this day and age no child should be having extraction of rotten teeth.