



Just imagine: a natural sweetener that tastes like sugar and is *good* for you! Well, imagine no more; I would like to introduce you to **xylitol**.

Xylitol is a sweet crystalline carbohydrate that is produced in small amounts in the human body and can also be found in virtually all vegetables and fruits. It is extracted mainly from birch bark and corn cobs for use as a natural sweetener which looks and tastes just like table sugar, with a cool clean finish.

Research has discovered xylitol to be beneficial in the treatment of 3 significant health conditions:

1. Dental disease
2. Upper respiratory conditions
3. Diabetes

Tooth Benefits:

Tooth decay is caused by bacteria that create acid when they digest the sugars and starches we eat. The bacteria use acid to stick to each other and to the tooth which over time melts enamel (demineralization), creating a break in the tooth surface (decay). Most sugars and sugar substitutes can be digested by bacteria to make acid. Xylitol, however, cannot be digested by bacteria. Without acid, the bacteria can't stick to each other or to your teeth so they simply slide off the teeth and down the throat without causing tooth decay. And because xylitol reduces acidity in the mouth, pH balance can be restored, allowing remineralization of tooth enamel.

Upper Respiratory Benefits

The structure of xylitol affects irritants and bacteria in the middle ear, throat and sinuses similarly to oral bacteria: they lose their ability to stick to mucus membranes and grow. Benefits have been shown in studies using xylitol gum, syrup or nasal spray.

Diabetes

Xylitol is digested and absorbed very slowly which produces a gradual rise in blood sugar and insulin levels. Its glycemic index is 7, compared to 68 for table sugar, which means that blood sugar levels remain low and stable, significantly reducing the body's demand for insulin.

Xylitol Use

For best results, use xylitol 3-5 times during the day to reduce both acid and bacteria – “strive for five.” Look for products with xylitol as the first ingredient. These mints or gum contain about 1 gram per piece. Studies have shown that for dental benefits, 4-12 grams spaced out throughout the day is the best. If used only occasionally, regardless of the amount, xylitol may not be effective.

Word of warning: If you're new to xylitol and you overdo, it may have a laxative effect. Please ease into its use.

Websites and Phone Numbers for Xylitol Info and Products

www.xylitol.org

www.globalsweet.com 800-601-0688

www.xlear.com 877-599-5327

www.myxylitol.com 208-478-5437

Also, Ice Breakers Ice Cubes gum can be found in many stores. (Target seems to be the best supplier.)

Note: Although xylitol is very beneficial for human consumption, it can be deadly to our pets. Please keep your supply in a safe place.

