

Understanding Tooth Sensitivity: Common Causes, Treatment Options, and Preventative Measures

SLIDELL, LA, UNITED STATES, May 29, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Tooth sensitivity is a frequent concern in dental offices across Southeast Louisiana. Characterized by a sudden, sharp discomfort in response to hot, cold, sweet, or acidic foods and drinks, the condition affects individuals of all ages and can interfere with daily activities such as eating and drinking. According to [Dr. Chandler Goltz, DMD](#), owner of [Slidell Smiles](#) in Slidell, Louisiana, addressing sensitivity involves identifying the underlying cause, selecting the right treatment, and implementing long-term preventative strategies.

"Tooth sensitivity is often the result of exposed dentin, the inner layer of the tooth that lies beneath the enamel," said Dr. Goltz. "When dentin becomes uncovered—through erosion, gum recession, or damage—the nerves inside the tooth become more susceptible to external triggers."

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Several factors contribute to this exposure. One of the most common causes is enamel erosion due to acidic foods and beverages. Carbonated drinks, citrus fruits, and sports drinks weaken enamel over time, making teeth more vulnerable to sensitivity. In other cases, aggressive brushing habits or using a hard-bristled toothbrush may physically wear down enamel and cause gum recession, both of which contribute to increased sensitivity.



Gum recession is another significant contributor. Receding gums expose the tooth's root surface, which lacks the protective enamel layer. This area is more porous and sensitive, particularly to temperature changes and touch. Gum recession may occur as a result of periodontal disease, genetic predisposition, or improper oral hygiene practices.

Tooth grinding and clenching, often associated with stress or sleep disorders, also play a role. This habit can lead to microscopic cracks in the enamel, exposing the dentin and triggering sensitivity. Over time, constant grinding may also lead to gum recession or even nerve inflammation within the teeth.

In some cases, dental procedures such as cleanings, fillings, or crown placements may cause temporary sensitivity. While this form of discomfort typically resolves within a few days or weeks, it can be an early sign of deeper nerve irritation, particularly if sensitivity lingers.

Treatment for tooth sensitivity depends on the severity and underlying cause. Desensitizing toothpaste is often the first step. These products contain compounds such as potassium nitrate or stannous fluoride, which help block the nerve pathways that transmit pain. When used consistently, desensitizing agents can reduce discomfort over time.

In-office treatments may be necessary for moderate to severe cases. Fluoride varnishes, bonding agents, and sealants can be applied to strengthen enamel and cover exposed dentin. These procedures are designed to reduce sensitivity by forming a protective layer that shields the tooth from irritants.

For gum recession, treatment options may include scaling and root planing, a deep cleaning procedure that removes plaque and tartar below the gum line. In cases of advanced recession, surgical procedures such as gum grafting may be recommended to restore coverage and protect the tooth roots.

Teeth affected by grinding may benefit from the use of custom-fitted night guards. These devices prevent further wear and distribute pressure evenly across the dental arch. Addressing underlying stress or sleep issues can also contribute to improved outcomes.

In situations where sensitivity stems from decay, cracked teeth, or failing restorations, restorative procedures such as fillings, crowns, or root canals may be necessary. Each treatment is selected based on the location and severity of the issue, as well as the patient's overall oral health.

Preventing sensitivity begins with a strong foundation of daily care. Brushing with a soft-bristled toothbrush, using non-abrasive toothpaste, and avoiding excessive force during brushing all contribute to enamel preservation. Flossing daily helps prevent gum disease, which reduces the risk of recession and further exposure.

Diet also plays a key role in prevention. Limiting the intake of acidic foods and beverages helps

protect enamel integrity. When consuming acidic items, rinsing with water afterward or using a straw can help minimize contact with teeth. Avoiding frequent snacking and maintaining adequate hydration supports the natural cleansing process of saliva.

Regular dental checkups are essential for monitoring enamel health, gum condition, and identifying early signs of sensitivity. Professional cleanings and exams allow for timely intervention and personalized guidance on oral care practices.

In the Gulf South, where lifestyle and dietary factors often include sweet tea, citrus fruits, and spicy cuisine, tooth sensitivity is a recurring concern. Addressing it requires a balance of education, preventive care, and when necessary, targeted treatment.

At Slidell Smiles, the approach to managing sensitivity includes both immediate relief and long-term prevention. By focusing on the source of the discomfort rather than just the symptoms, individuals are better equipped to maintain comfortable, functional teeth throughout their lives.

Identifying the cause, choosing the right treatment, and maintaining consistent oral care are the key factors in reducing tooth sensitivity and protecting dental health for the future.

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