

# **Chew On This**

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Chewing gum, it seems, isn't just for fun anymore. In fact, in 2006 the Wrigley gum company created the Wrigley Science Institute consisting of an international advisory panel of scientists and research experts to study the potential benefits of chewing gum.

## **Gum Weighs In**

Chewing gum may help people with their weight control efforts. At just five to 10 calories a serving, chewing a piece of gum instead of eating a high-calorie snack can help reduce calorie intake. Chewing gum may also serve as a diversion between meals and help prevent the "mindless munching" that can lead to weight gain. A survey taken by Wrigley during its participation in the 2005 American Dietetic Association's Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo, revealed that 87 percent of surveyed dietitians chew gum themselves and more than half recommend chewing gum to their clients to help in weight management efforts.

## **Your Brain On Gum**

Chewing gum improves focus, concentration and alertness. Research also has shown that chewing gum appears to improve people's ability to retain and retrieve information. Professional athletes chew gum to "keep in the game." And in schools some teachers are reversing school policies against chewing gum and are encouraging students to chew during tests to increase alertness and concentration. Since World War I, the U.S. Armed Forces have supplied chewing gum to military personnel in field and combat rations to help increase alertness, ease tension and improve oral health. In a 2006 study conducted on behalf of the Wrigley Science Institute, people were more calm and relaxed in dealing with life's everyday stresses when they chewed gum.

## **Smile**

Chewing sugar-free gum after eating is clinically proven to be an important part of good oral health. Chewing gum stimulates the most important natural defense against tooth decay—saliva. When you chew gum, you produce more saliva. If you chew gum after you eat, the extra saliva can neutralize and wash away the acid that's produced when food breaks down in your mouth. This can help prevent tooth decay. The minerals in the extra saliva can even strengthen the hard, outer surface of your teeth (enamel). It's important to choose gum carefully, however. The American Dental Association (ADA) recommends sugarless gum. Chewing sugar-free gum is not intended to replace brushing and flossing. Some research suggests that too much gum chewing can be detrimental to your teeth or jaw muscles or both—so check with your dentist.