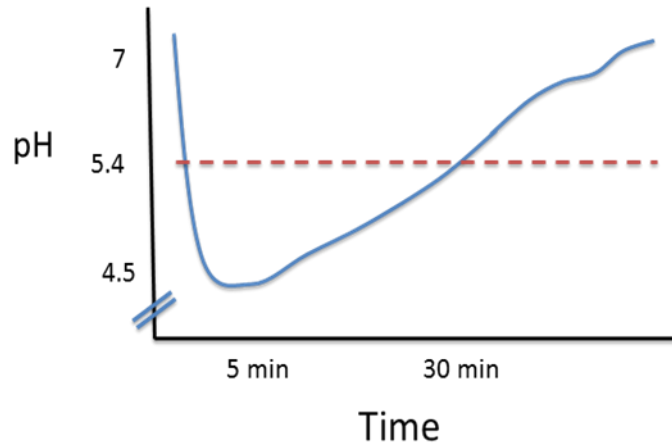




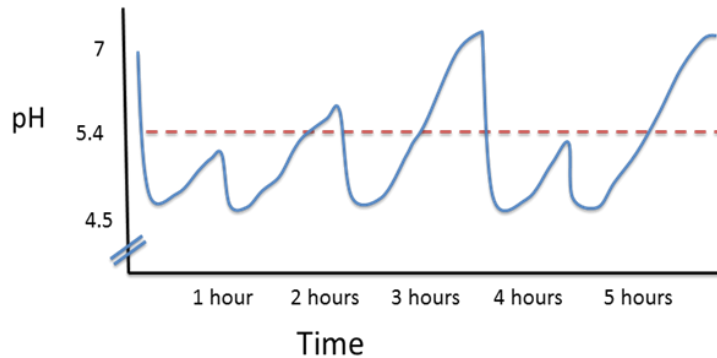
A pH of 7 is neutral, like water. An acid pH is less than 7. For example, battery acid is about 1.0 or less.

Demineralization of enamel and caries (cavities) occur when acid in the mouth reach a critical point, about 5.4 or less, although this may vary from person to person. This acid attack occurs quickly after eating, but may take time (perhaps 30-40 minutes) to return to normal levels.



A person that snacks often throughout the day is more likely to get cavities because the mouth is in an acidic range for a greater period of time per day. The patient in the graph below had two meals and three in between meal snacks.

Note that the pH in the mouth is below the critical 5.4 level most of the time.



Of course, there are many other factors in getting cavities... but this is one factor that is often forgotten. In addition, carbohydrates such as chips, crackers, and bread cause the same acidic pH. So, be careful of these "hidden" sugars.

As the following graph demonstrates, the worse the oral hygiene is, the more acidic the acid is. So... brush and floss!

