



by jok church

Hey Beakman,
After you brush your
teeth, orange juice
tastes awful. What's
going on?

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Questions, name & address

: STUFF TO DO :

Shake lots of pepper onto a bowl of still, calm water.
Make a film of pepper – you know, way lots.

Put a small dab of toothpaste onto the end of a
toothpick and touch the paste onto the pepper film.
The pepper should spread apart.

What happened is that the chemical with the long
name is a detergent, close to being soap, and it

breaks a kind of film that water makes on top of
itself, called surface tension.

Something close to that happens on your taste
buds. And it changes your taste buds into tasting
only a part of what's really there.

Hey Dan,
A chemical in toothpaste gets your taste buds
mixed up, and it's in all toothpastes, even the fancy
stuff from Maine.

The chemical is sodium lauryl sulfate and it's in
toothpaste as a kind of fake-out. Its job is to make
foam. But foam, pretty much, just makes us feel
good. The real work of toothpaste is done by fine
abrasives, like chalk, that grind away at the junk on
your teeth.

Beakman
Beakman Place

Your taste buds are covered with a thin skin that
is made out of stuff that's very close to being a fat.
The foaming stuff in toothpaste breaks that thin skin
and changes the way your taste buds work.

It shuts off the sweet tasters and changes the
sour/acid tasters into the bitter tasters. Since o.j. is
sweet and sour/acid, you end up tasting bitter
only – what
you called awful.

