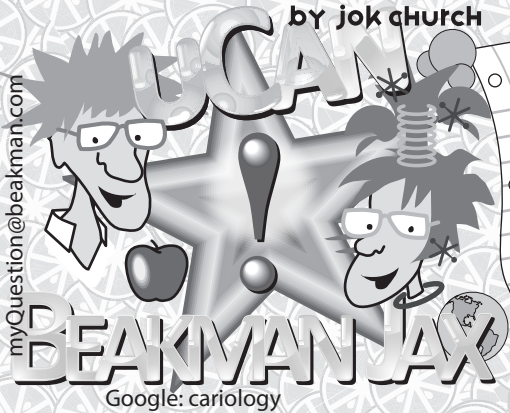


by jok church

myQuestion@beakman.com



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

Dan Mires
Smithtown, Tennessee

Beakman or Jax
1130 Walnut Street
Kansas City, MO 64106
Questions, name & address

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

: 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.

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.

