

5 Rules for the Whitest Smile Ever

Kelli Acciardo Aug 27, 2017

If you've been hitting the iced lattes, red vino, and other stain-causing food and beverages the past few months (even those farmers' market berries are to blame), then chances are your pearly whites might not be so, um, white. "The most common reasons for teeth to get stained and yellowed are drinking dark-colored liquids such as coffee, tea, red wine, and soda," says New York City-based dentist Steven Davidowitz. "In addition, poor oral hygiene and the natural aging process will lead to discoloration of your teeth." To get your smile back on track, follow these rules.

INVEST IN A GOOD TOOTHBRUSH



"By brushing gently, twice a day, with fresh soft bristles, covering all surfaces of your teeth over a full two minutes, you will be able to keep surface stains away and your teeth naturally white," says dentist Jennifer Plotnik of Grand Street Dental in Brooklyn. "An electric toothbrush like Quip (\$25), has vibrating bristles and a timer to ensure a sensitive, but thorough clean, and they have a brush head subscription program, which allows you to replace them when you need to."

OPT FOR A WHITENING TOOTHPASTE



Aside from brushing with the right brush, Davidowitz recommends using a specialized toothpaste for clear results. “Professional dental cleaning visits are critical to removing the plaque and stains that develop over time, however, whitening toothpaste can help the process on a daily basis,” he says.

Try Luster Premium White Power White Deep Stain Eraser (\$7), which claims to remove 95 percent of surface stains in five days, or Colgate Optic White Radiant (\$7), which relies on hydrogen peroxide to remove deep-set stains. Or, keep the paste you love and go for ECO Balance (\$79), a gel that you place on top your toothpaste that volumizes as it turns into a foam. This delivers actives to hard-to-reach areas (like where decay and bleeding gums start... eek), so you end up with a healthier mouth, fresh breath, and whiter teeth over time.