

Smile Like The Stars Guide To...

Maintaining White Teeth and Good Oral Hygiene



Maintaining White Teeth

We feel that teeth whitening is not something you have done once and forget about, would you just have your hair cut once and because it looked amazing upon leaving the salon forget about it for a few years and hope it keeps the same beautiful style!

This is why Smile Like the Stars feels patients should be given the advice and tips to keep your teeth looking white for longer. Keeping your teeth whiter for longer is not a difficult task more a few small changes to lifestyle. Areas we recommend are:

1. Eliminate/reduce the amount of black tea and strong coffee you have. The more milk the less staining acquired through such consumption.
2. Smoking, has two effects. It causes your teeth to acquire a yellow tone and eventually brown. Secondly it creates brown staining in between teeth which is unsightly.
3. Red wine/Port. Next time you're at a restaurant and can't decide between a white or red wine, go for the former. Red wine, if drunk regularly causes a lot of discolouring.
4. Stop using whitening tooth paste!! Why you ask as this whitens your teeth surely. The truth, it actually has small particles within the paste to provide an abrasive action to the enamel, creating a short term whitening effect. However this is actually harmful to the enamel, gradually eroding it. Your enamel is what gives you white teeth and with less of it, your teeth can no longer be as white as you wish or once were.

Good Oral Hygiene

Good oral hygiene is very important as an unhealthy tooth can't be a clean white tooth! Ultimately the reason why we need good oral hygiene is for the removal of plaque and tartar from teeth to prevent cavities, gingivitis and gum disease. This fact should get you taking more care of your teeth, gum disease causes at least one-third of adult tooth loss.

The following are basic must do's:

1. Flossing daily, preferably before bedtime, is an important element of oral hygiene, it removes the plaque and the decaying food remaining stuck between the teeth. This decayed food and plaque cause irritation to the gums, allowing the gum tissue to bleed more easily. Acid forming foods left on teeth also demineralise teeth eventually causing cavities, receding gums and gum disease.
2. Cleaning the tongue as part of daily oral hygiene is essential, since it removes the bad breath generating coating of bacteria, a combination of dead cells, decaying food particles and fungi. Also an added bonus of a clean tongue is that it removes some of the bacteria which causes tooth decay and gum problems.
3. Sugar, or rather the frequency food/drinks that contain sugar are consumed as opposed to the amount at a specific point. The more frequently sugars are consumed, the greater the time during which the tooth is exposed to low pH levels, causing demineralisation. It is important

therefore to try to encourage infrequent consumption of food and drinks containing sugar so that teeth have a chance to be repaired by remineralisation and fluoride. Limiting sugar-containing foods and drinks to meal times is one way to reduce the incidence of cavities.

4. Chewing sugar free gum assists oral hygiene between and around the teeth, cleaning and removing particles that otherwise would be difficult to remove.

10 Foods That Are Good For Your Teeth

Some foods can partially protect against cavities. Fluoride is a primary protector against dental cavities. Fluoride makes the surface of teeth more resistant to acids during the process of remineralisation. All foods increase saliva production, and since saliva contains buffer chemicals helping to stabilize the pH to near 7 (neutral) in the mouth. Foods high in fibre also help to increase the flow of saliva. According to World Dental, these are the top ten beneficial foods for teeth:

1. Green tea contains polyphenol antioxidant plant compounds that reduce plaque and help reduce cavities and gum disease. Tea may help reduce bad breath. Tooth enamel is strengthened because green tea contains fluoride which promotes healthy teeth.
2. Milk and yogurt are good for teeth because they contain low acidity. They are also low in decay-inducing sugar. Milk is a good source of calcium, the main component of teeth.
3. Cheese contains calcium and phosphate, which helps balance pH in the mouth, preserves and rebuilds tooth enamel, produces saliva, and kills bacteria that cause cavities.
4. Fruits such as apples, strawberries and kiwis contain Vitamin C. This vitamin is considered the element that holds cells together. If this vitamin is neglected, gum cells can break down, making gums tender and susceptible to disease.
5. Vegetables: Vitamin A, found in pumpkins, carrots, sweet potatoes and broccoli, is necessary for the formation of tooth enamel. Crunchy vegetables also help clean gums.
6. Onions contain antibacterial sulphur compounds. Tests show that onions kill various types of bacteria, especially when eaten raw.
7. Celery protects teeth by producing saliva which neutralizes bacteria that cause cavities. It also massages the teeth and gums.
8. Sesame seeds reduce plaque and help build tooth enamel. They're also high in calcium.
9. Animal food: beef, chicken, turkey, and eggs contain phosphorus which, with calcium, is one of the two most vital minerals of teeth and bone.
10. Water cleans the mouth and produces saliva that deposits essential minerals into the teeth. It keeps teeth hydrated and washes away particles from the teeth

