

MIXED MAKEUP

Does Whitening Make Your Teeth Yellower?

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It's a concern that's come up in several of my conversations lately: Does whitening your teeth eventually make them more yellow than they were before? Like Botox, many people I know forgo whitening their teeth due to the maintenance concerns. You know, that whole "once you pop, you can't stop" mentality. We worry that whitening our teeth will turn into a vicious cycle of constantly having to whiten them or else experience the wrath of unattractive yellow teeth. It makes sense when you think about it, but rather than continue to speculate, I went straight to the experts.

The answer is simple: it's impossible. So why do we think it does? "Some people have unrealistic expectations and once they see whiter teeth, they want their teeth even whiter," says Los Angeles cosmetic dentist **Bill Dorfman**, DDS.

It seems that this is just a case of never being satisfied. That said, we're sorry to report that the results you see aren't permanent either, especially for those who drink coffee and red wine in addition to other teeth-staining foods like tomato sauce and cherries. That means that after three to four months most patients need to do a touch-up session to maintain.

The good news though is that there are many habits that you can incorporate into your life that'll keep your smile white for longer. "Some common fruits and vegetables, work to clean

your teeth as you eat them,” says Beverly Hills, CA, cosmetic dentist Kevin Sands, DDS. A healthy diet helps you produce more saliva which in turn helps clean your teeth and also neutralizes acids in your mouth. So the next time you’re at the store swing by the produce section and pick up some carrots, celery, cauliflower, and apples.

Apples, in particular, are especially good for your pearly whites. “Apples are high in acid which makes them ideal for whitening,” says Dr. Sands. In fact, apples are known as “mini toothbrushes” by dentists. That’s because the natural fiber in them helps scrub your teeth and also brightens them in the process.

Some other maintenance tips include brushing with an electric toothbrush to really exfoliate stains from teeth as well as using whitening toothpaste, mouthwashes, and even whitening flosses. An in between professional treatments, use at-home teeth whitening products.

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