

Women's Health — "Make Your Smile Sparkle"

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Beauty Lab

Make Your Smile Sparkle

Teeth don't get wrinkles, but they do show signs of aging. Take these steps to keep your choppers looking beautiful for decades to come.

Whiten Up

"Teeth darken with age because they absorb color from foods and drinks," says Jason Olitsky, D.D.S., a cosmetic dentist based in

say that a smile is the first facial feature they notice about someone.

The American Academy of Periodontology

Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. "That's why we associate white teeth with youthfulness."

just 5 percent a few years ago) and have adhesives strong enough to stay put for the recommended 30 minutes. Results last up to a year. Try Crest Whitestrips Advanced Seal (\$45, cvs.com).

Get Even

"Over time, teeth can shift, so straightening them can take 10 to 15 years off your appearance," says Jeff Golub-Evans, D.D.S., a New York City-based cosmetic dentist. A good option is six-month braces, which move the root and base of the teeth at once, fixing gaps and crooked-

If you were a candy-loving kid, you may be flashing more mouth silver than Johnny Depp in *Pirates of the Caribbean*. "No one wants to see a bunch of metal—it reminds people of their grandparents," Golub-Evans says.

But concerns have been raised about the safety of replacing amalgam fillings. "They're an alloy of silver, mercury, and other metals," Olitsky says. "When removing them, it's possible for mercury vapors to be released." A new device called Isolite reduces that risk. It has a plastic mouth guard with a vacuum attachment

aster than ads. Best of n use clear thin, barely wires. Cost: \$500. To orthodontics align can be a e, at \$5,000 to se clear, retain- s do the job in s to a year.

Fillings

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White hot and healthy.

that can suck out vapors so you don't inhale them. Your dentist can then refill your teeth using the same white resin used for tooth bonding. This costs more than amalgam, so expect to pay the difference: \$150 to \$450 per tooth.

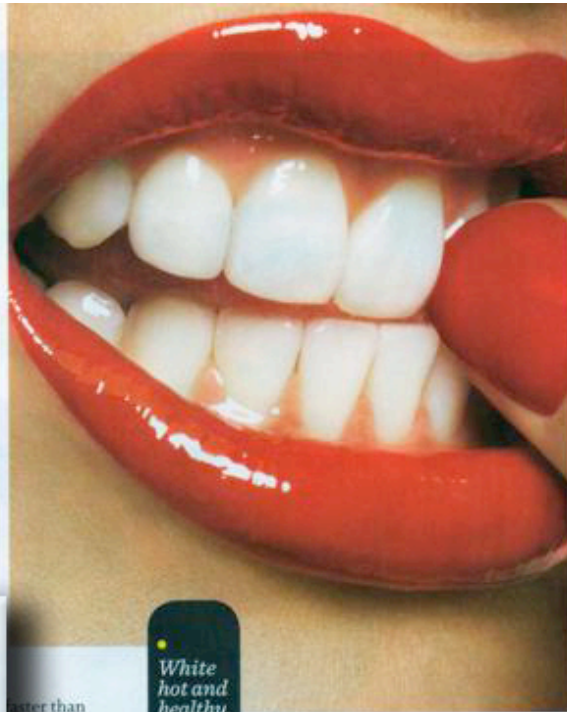
Disease-Proof Your Mouth

Neglect your gums and bacteria will start to hibernate in there, leading to redness and inflammation. Left unchecked, the inflammation can

progress into gingivitis (gum disease), the main cause of receding gums, sensitivity, and tooth loss.

Make a habit of brushing twice daily for two minutes, using toothpaste with fluoride and mild abrasives like silica. Find both in Colgate Total Advanced Whitening (\$4 for 5.8 oz, drugstore.com). Also, floss (try shred-proof Reach Total Care Floss, \$3, drugstore.com) and swish mouthwash once daily.

—Alexis Farah



3 WAYS TO FAKE PEARLY WHITES

- 1/ If your smile looks yellow, wear berry or bubble-gum pink lip colors: their blue undertones will bring out the white in your teeth. For grayish choppers, pick a copper or bronze shade.
- 2/ The darker your skin tone, the whiter your teeth will appear by comparison. To get a subtle glow, brush on a bronzing powder or mix a little bronzing gel with your usual moisturizer.
- 3/ Pop a piece of sugar-free whitening gum. It'll scrub the surface of your teeth and lift surface stains as you chew. Look for one that contains xylitol—it also helps prevent tooth decay.

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