

Stained Teeth – Why?

We love having white teeth... it enhances the beauty of a smile and brightens up the face... but very few people have bright, white teeth. So what actually causes teeth to stain?

Many people believe that dental problems like stained teeth are caused exclusively by poor oral hygiene. While that may be a contributing factor, even the best-cared-for teeth can become discoloured over time. Various substances, like juice, coffee, tea, dark cola, red wine and even certain antibiotics, can cause teeth stains.

The obvious factors also apply; smokers and people with poor oral hygiene or lifestyle habits are very likely end up with stained teeth. There are many things we do on a daily bases that can cause our teeth to become stained and discoloured. Over time, the problem can grow worse. Here are the most common causes of tooth discolouration.

FOODS

Foods and beverages that can stain your teeth include soy sauce, berries, black tea, coffee, red wines, curries, colas and red fruit juices. Acidic foods and beverages or extreme changes of hot and cold can cause teeth pores to expand, which also may allow stains to penetrate. Avoiding or limiting how often these foods are consumed is one way of protecting against staining.

TOBACCO

In addition to serious health complications, tobacco products cause yellowed and stained



teeth. Cigarettes, cigars, pipes and chew are the most common uses of tobacco, all of which will stain teeth with continued use.

WATER

If a significant amount of water containing high levels of fluoride is consumed, brownish stains on teeth

Keep in mind: many factors, including diet and smoking, contribute to stained teeth.

may appear. This is especially true for those who drink water with high levels of fluoride during childhood.

MEDICATIONS

When used in excess, fluoride can cause tooth discolouration in children, as can tetracycline and derivative compounds of tetracycline such as minocycline and doxycycline. Minocycline has also been reported



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to cause teeth discolouration in adults.

OTHER FACTORS

Aging, tooth decay and tooth trauma are also common causes of discolouration. Additional attention to cleaning may be necessary to maintain white teeth in later stages of adulthood. In addition, a number of diseases and disease treatments can cause discoloured teeth.

MAINTAIN CLEAN TEETH:

The good news is that maintaining a clean, plaque-free smile is possible. First, remember to rinse away stains. If you are unable to brush your teeth after consuming food or beverages that may stain your teeth, preserve clean teeth by **rinsing your mouth with water or a dental rinse.**

Next, eat right. Eating a balanced diet including recommended servings of fruits and vegetables will help promote clean teeth. Finally, if you have not already done so, quit smoking. Smoking is one of the top factors that undermine clean teeth. And of course, visit your dentist regularly to ensure that you are on the right path in your oral health plan and **get your teeth cleaned by a dentist every 6-8 months!**

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in your smile*

The Dental Care and
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