



Teeth whitening

Whitening procedures have effectively restored the smile of people with stained, dull, or discolored teeth.

The darker tissue of your teeth, the dentin, can become exposed as the outer layer of enamel is worn away by the effects of aging or things like caffeine and tobacco.

Food particles are naturally attracted to a tooth's enamel by a certain protein. Products like coffee and tea, berries and soy sauce are notorious for staining teeth. Over time, teeth actually become more absorbent and vulnerable to staining from food and other substances.

One type of stain—caused by traumatic injuries, medications and fluorosis—actually begins inside the tooth; brushing and flossing don't help. Another type of stain—one that can be more easily attacked by brushing, flossing and rinsing—is caused by external factors such as foods.

More and more people today are choosing tooth-whitening procedures to reverse the effects of aging and abuse from food and tobacco stains.

Some commercially available "whitening toothpastes" can be somewhat effective at removing stains and making teeth a few shades brighter. However, many of these products have abrasive substances that can actually wear away your tooth's enamel.

Whitening agents actually change the color of your teeth, but only are effective on certain types of stains. For example, bleaching agents have a difficult time removing brownish or grayish stains. These products also are not as effective on pitted or badly discolored teeth, or on restorations such as crowns, bridges, bonding and tooth-colored fillings (porcelain veneers or dental bonding may be more appropriate in this case).

Professional whitening performed by our office is considered to be the most effective and safest method; done properly, tooth whitening can last as long as five years. Over-the-counter whitening systems are somewhat effective as long as they are monitored and directions followed closely.