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Bright stuff

Five steps to a younger-looking smile

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For Metro Canada



From peptide-laced night creams to grey-masking hair dyes, there are countless ways to fight the first signs of aging.

But one area of the body usually gets overlooked: your smile. It's no surprise that a fondness for red wine, coffee and cigarettes can discolour your teeth, making them look older, says Dr. Charles Botbol, a Toronto-based dentist. But that's not the only factor: bad breath, worn-down teeth and lines around the mouth can also add years.

We asked Botbol, Dr. Maryam Adibfar, a Toronto-based dentist and Dr. Stephen Mulholland, a Toronto-based cosmetic surgeon, for their best advice on achieving a younger-looking smile.

Follow a good home care routine: "At least twice a day, brush your teeth and

"Chronic bad breath, which is caused by poor oral hygiene, can make you seem older"

Dr. Charles Botbol, a Toronto-based dentist

gums for two to two and half minutes," says Adibfar. An electric toothbrush with a built-in timer (such as Oral-B's Pulsonic Sonic Toothbrush) can help you keep track of how long you're brushing; they're also better than regular toothbrushes at removing plaque and preventing stains from forming. Don't forget to floss at least once a day, too.

Freshen up: "Chronic bad breath, which is caused by poor oral hygiene, can make you seem older," says Botbol. A pre-brushing

rinse like Listerine Extreme Whitening not only freshens breath by stopping bacteria in its tracks, it also gently lifts stains.

Get regular check-ups: To keep your teeth and gums in tip-top shape, see your dentist at least once every six months for an examination and professional cleaning, says Adibfar.

Whiten and brighten: Cut back on stain-producing foods and beverages and start using at-home or professional whitening treatments. "For most people, whitening strips are af-



Keep teeth looking white and bright by cutting back on stain-producing foods and beverages and start using at-home or professional whitening treatments.

fordable and do the job," says Botbol. Professional treatments — including custom-made whitening trays or Zoom whitening (both start at \$300 and up) — perform deeper stain removal.

Consider investing in cosmetic improvements: If your teeth require more serious repair work — they're misshapen, crooked or worn from grinding, for example — a cosmetic dentist may suggest ceramic reconstruction or contouring (reshaping existing teeth), says Botbol. But a younger-looking smile doesn't stop there. Hyaluronic acid

Torching teeth?

• And you thought the dental drill was bad! Can you imagine a tiny blowtorch blasting away bacteria in your mouth? Researchers in California have created a new tool to fight plaque that builds up inside the teeth. Said to be a cross between a light saber and mouth wash, this tiny, purple plasma blowtorch uses sonic micropulses to zap bacteria in

hard-to-reach places deep inside the mouth. Inventors — from the University of Southern California schools of dentistry and engineering — say that the blowtorch technology will revolutionize many facets of medicine. The device has already been used in root canals.

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FOR METRO CANADA

fillers can restore fullness to the lips and fill in the nasolabial folds [laugh lines], says Mulholland. "Botox

can also diminish the smaller lines and folds that run down from the corners of the mouth," he says.