

Dental Health 101: Advice From the Expert



Keeping your teeth, gums, and mouth healthy is one of the essentials of good health. To help you stay on top of your oral health, Everyday Health went to the experts to get their advice on teeth-cleaning, dental fillings, cosmetic dentistry, and more.

Read their answers below.

Over-the-Counter Vs. Professional Teeth Whitening

Teeth whitening options range from products you can apply at home to laser treatments. Find out how to choose the best option for you.



Elisa Mello, DDS (nycsmiledesign.com)
Cosmetic Dentist, New York City

Many over-the-counter whitening products are not as effective because their chemistry is either very weak and cannot bleach the teeth for sufficient amounts of time or they are very strong and dangerous to use and ingest. Professional teeth whiteners are safe, effective, and done under the supervision of a dental professional. In most cases, it is worth the extra cost to visit the dentist to get long-lasting, safe results.

Foods That Stain Teeth

Certain foods have gotten bad raps for staining teeth. But should you avoid them?

The natural pigments in many foods and drinks are powerful staining agents. In fact, many have been used to dye cloth in the past. The staining of teeth is done over time and the effects of these pigmented foods and drinks are cumulative.

The Latest in Dental Braces

Move over, metal mouth. The newest technologies in braces are less visible and faster.

The latest changes to braces would include expanded use of clear aligner orthodontics such as Invisalign and accelerated orthodontics using brackets for six months or less.

Proper case selection is the most important determinant in the success of accelerated orthodontics. I would recommend accelerated orthodontics in the right case for the right patient.

The Pros and Cons of Dental Veneers

More people are opting for veneers, tooth-colored shells that cover your teeth for a more beautiful smile. But are they worth the cost?



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Starting with the cons — veneers are irreversible, costly, and need to be replaced after 15-20 years. The pros? Veneers can allow for both shape and color changes, can make your teeth stronger than they were, and are natural looking and allow for a true smile makeover.

Extreme Cosmetic Dentistry Procedures

Tattooed teeth, snap-on smiles; — This cosmetic dentist fills us in on some out-of-the ordinary procedures.

- Patients who have had major jaw surgery and still not happy with how they look
 - Patients who have gotten “grills”
 - Patients who have over-bleached and do not know how to stop. Some people go too far when they are either given ill advice or take matters into their own hands and ignore the advice of a dental profession.
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