



SAY CHEESE

WHAT YOUR SMILE SAYS ABOUT YOU

THERE'S NO GETTING AROUND IT, IT'S NOT A PRETTY SITE. It's stinky and crusty and fuzzy and yellow. It can be painful and swollen and bloody and misshapen. And if you're not careful it can happen to you. Or perhaps it already has.

The words, "smile for the camera" make you head for cover and you haven't heard the term "pearly whites" since Watergate made the headlines.

You guessed it; we're talking about your smile.

And if you do happen to be one of the many people who have neglected theirs in the past, we have some good news: there's still hope. Yes, that's right there is still plenty of ways for you to turn those chompers into the envious Chicklet style you've only dreamed of.

First thing first. What exactly is it about your teeth that cause you to hang your head in shame? Is it the colour? Can they not figure out what way is forward and what way is backward? Are you actually missing chunks of your teeth? Or maybe all of the above problems wreak havoc on your smile. Well lucky for you, we live in 2010 and that means the dental possibilities are endless.

According to Dr. Michael Weinberg of St. Clair Dental in Toronto: "Not everyone will have a beautiful Hollywood smile, but you can have a healthy smile."

The fact is teeth aren't meant to be perfectly white in the first place. The outer layer of teeth, the enamel, varies from light yellow to grayish white naturally. That being said, Dr. Weinberg understands



ACCORDING TO A 2007 CREST SURVEY, MORE THAN HALF OF THE STUDY PARTICIPANTS WERE MORE LIKELY TO BE HIRED (58%) AND RECEIVED LARGER SALARY OFFERS (53%) AFTER THEIR TEETH HAD BEEN WHITENED.



the pressure to have what he refers to as “toilet bowl white teeth.” These Hollywood teeth are everywhere.

This pressure is only magnified when you consider that one’s smile is normally one of the first couple things that is noticed during a job interview, or any first encounter for that matter. Although it may not be natural to have perfectly white teeth, it is natural to want them. After all, white teeth do convey the “healthy” smile Dr. Weinberg refers to.

So how can it be achieved? Depends on the amount you want to spend, the speed at which you want it fixed and how many shades whiter you want the finished result.

The most inexpensive and available method of teeth whitening is your average pharmacy style whitening strips. Crest Whitestrips, for example, became wildly popular the minute they hit shelves for one reason: they actually work. Dr. Weinberg says, “Crest Whitestrips are very good. They don’t get in between the teeth as a custom take home guard would, but the research has shown that they are very effective and last two to three months.”

If your teeth are relatively white to begin with, at approximately \$50.00, what do you have to lose?

Only downside: Crest explains their product contains enamel-safe whitening ingredients that remove surface stains and whiten by deep cleaning and protect from the buildup of everyday stains. In plain English this means it removes the stains darkening your toilet bowl white dreams, but it doesn’t actually make your teeth whiter.

If two months of whiter teeth just doesn’t do it for you, maybe you’d be interested in home whitening from your dentist. Home whitening is done using a mouth tray that has been custom molded to your mouth at your dentist. The tray is like a sports guard but is only about a 16th of an inch to ensure the whitening gel comes in direct contact with every nook and cranny of your teeth. Dr. Weinberg says, “The home whitening system is done over two weeks and can last a year to two years.”

How does it work? According to Discus Dental, the system combines exclusive use of amorphous calcium phosphate (ACP), potassium nitrate and fluoride to help reduce sensitivity, rebuild enamel, add luster and reduce fade back.

However, the grand daddy of whitening is none other than the Zoom

system. Done at your dentist’s office, a material derivative of hydrogen peroxide is applied to your teeth and an intense light is pointed at your mouth. The result? An average of eight shades lighter in just one visit. And although the system costs approximately \$400.00 to \$650.00, the mere convenience and drastic results are well worth the price. Seriously, just take a peek at your paycheck once your new teeth get you hired.

Okay, so perhaps you are one of those freaky white-toothed individuals who have read to this point and thought, “suckers.” Well, chances are you were cursed with crooked teeth or have chipped a couple of those bad boys along the way. If the former of the two hold true and think that braces are out of the question past puberty, we have the answer: porcelain veneers.

That’s right, for about \$800.00 to \$1500.00 per tooth you can get a cosmetic solution to an orthodontic problem. Dr. Weinberg explains, “The teeth are shaved off and brought in line with porcelain veneers. It’s putting a new surface on crooked teeth to give the illusion of straight teeth.” Now, of course you could get veneers for as little as \$200.00 per tooth, but it’s the

THIS IS RESERVED FOR A PULL QUOTE. BLAH BLAH BLAH SOMETHING IMPORTANT ABOUT TEETH.





difference between an amateur making an art project out of your new smile, or a professional sculpting a tooth intended for your mouth alone.

Finally, the answer to chipped, yellow and crooked teeth all in one: crowns or caps of course. Yep that's right, they're not just for older, failing teeth.

Crowns are the most aggressive cosmetic procedure for less than attractive teeth of all shapes and sizes. According to Dr. Weinberg about 1 mm is taken off around the entire tooth and it is capped with a ceramic crown. The custom stained and shaded crown is either bonded or cemented onto your teeth. But, Dr. Weinberg warns, "None of this should be rushed into. If you want narrower teeth, longer teeth or so-called normal teeth, sometimes you just need minor gum surgery,

for example. Sometimes, you just need to laser off some excess gum and new teeth were there the whole time."

"Take someone in their 40s with a great big space in their teeth, and suddenly they seem adolescent. In a high profile business how serious do you think they'll be taken? This is how you look, so take it seriously. In any job interview I notice eye contact first and teeth second," Dr. Weinberg continues.

There you go, no more excuses. You now know how important it is to keep those pearly whites, well, pearly and white and you also know how easy this actually is. And if you happen to be one of those lucky people with every tooth in place, don't take it for granted because a crown could be a chip from a beer bottle away.

PROPER BRUSHING

You're proud of your smile, you use it freely and you think pretty highly of your teeth care skills. But, would your dentist be proud? Looks can be deceiving so although your teeth may be the subject of compliment after compliment, are they actually healthy?

It all starts with your good friend the toothbrush and using it the way it was intended.

First of all, if you're brushing for less than two minutes you are not brushing long enough. You should be using short, gentle strokes and being very careful along your gum line.

Next, the brush should be at about a 45-degree angle, that's halfway between perpendicular and parallel to your teeth if you're curious. Now that you've got the brush positioned nicely, you're going to gently brush the inside, outside and chewing surface of every single tooth while using short back and forth strokes. Please keep the word gentle in mind, roughhousing with your teeth could lead to gum recession, which is not a pretty sight. Google it if you need any convincing.

Finish up with a light brush of the tongue to ensure good breath and you're good to go.

