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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.

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

Dr. Charles Botbol, a Toronto-based dentist

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 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 al-



CLAUDE F. SOLT

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

so 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.

**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 affordable 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.

**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.

**Consider investing in cosmetic improvements:** If your teeth require more serious repair work — they're

missshapen, 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 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.

**Keep teeth in tip-top shape by seeing your dentist once every six months**

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