

TEETH WHITENING

Q:

For many years, I have been trying to make my teeth clean by brushing twice or sometimes thrice daily and that includes flossing. However, I am disappointed that my teeth still remains yellow despite all efforts to remove the stains. What can I do to whiten my teeth?

A:

Tooth discolouration or yellow teeth is a common problem. The causes are as follows:

- **Lifestyle:** Smoking, drinking coffee and tea and chewing tobacco are more likely to cause the teeth to turn yellow. Dark-coloured foods and beverages (including red wine and colas), dark sauces and fruits such as grapes, blueberries and pomegranates will also cause stained teeth. They are high in chromogens, which are pigment-producing substances with a penchant for sticking to tooth enamel.
- **Acidic foods and beverages:** Drinks such as soda, juices or sports drinks can wear away tooth enamel, making it easier for chromogens to latch onto the teeth.
- **Natural ageing process:** Enamel, the once-strong outer layer of the tooth which serves as the protective coating, becomes thinner as people age. Underneath the tooth enamel is a pale brown substance called dentin, which becomes obvious when the enamel, which is usually thick and white, becomes thin.
- **Medication:** Young children under the age of eight who have used certain medicines such as antibiotic tetracycline or doxycycline may have stained teeth in adulthood. Some antihistamines prescribed for high blood pressure and medications for anti-hypertensives and antipsychotic can also cause stained teeth.
- **Health conditions:** People suffering from a disease or undergoing treatments such as chemotherapy and/or radiation to treat cancer, are likely to have brownish teeth.
- **Fluoride:** Young children who take in water that contains excessive amount of fluoride may develop yellow-stained teeth in the future.
- **Genetics:** It is also possible that some people have inherited thin enamel from their parents and the pale brown dentin shows through their teeth.

There are things you can do to make your teeth white again.



Dr Raymond Lim

Dr Raymond Lim graduated from the National University of Singapore with a Bachelor of Dental Surgery (B.D.S.). In 2013, he founded the B9 Dental Centre, which has placed emphasis on acquiring latest medical technology, maintaining strict hygiene standards and providing quality services to the

patients since the beginning. Thanks to the clinic's comprehensive expertise and trusted service, Dr Lim has seen early success, with the current three clinics opened within the first year of operation to meet the increasing demands and requests from the patients, ensuring high customer satisfaction.

For the past three years, B9 Dental Centre has always been providing quality services at a price which is fair, reasonable and transparent. It has garnered recognition from the patients and in the industry through various awards, motivating Dr Lim and his team to work even harder. The team hopes to change the way people see and understand dental care, and to offer better service to the patients.

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- 2014** Top 10 Special Achievement Awards in Dental Care



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For external stains:

- **Watching what you eat:** Drink plain water after taking acidic or dark colour food and beverages. Drinking through a straw will minimise fluid stains on the teeth.
- **Stop smoking.**
- **Good dental hygiene:** Proper brushing, flossing and regular dental checkups help keep teeth healthy for a lifetime.
- **Visit the dentist:** It is best to have your teeth cleaned regularly by a dentist. This will help to remove staining.

For internal stains:

- **Teeth whitening:** Use a take-home kit like Zoom Whitening. Alternatively, ZOOM Chairside Laser Whitening, a bleaching process that can take as little as 45 minutes, can whiten teeth in a single treatment.
- **Bonding:** This method is easier and less costly. Composite resin is used to cover the imperfection and smoothen the surface of your stained or crooked teeth. Bonding is best for repairing single chipped or stained tooth, but not recommended for all your teeth.
- **Veneers:** These are used to cover up stained and crooked teeth, or to hide gaps between teeth. Some enamel will first be removed from the tooth surface to allow the veneers of similar thickness to be added to the tooth surface. Next, a mould of your teeth will be sent to a dental lab, where porcelain veneers are constructed to fit your teeth and cover any imperfections. The veneers will be cemented onto your natural teeth during the next visit.

Each treatment is safe, but it is recommended to have a discussion with your dentist first to determine which option is best for you. **PRIME**