

Teeth Whitening: How Foods Affect It

Foods that cause staining or discoloration

Foods and beverages cause stains on our teeth by sticking to the protective layer of protein that our mouths naturally coat our tooth enamel in to prevent damage to the enamel layer. Obvious culprits include berries, curries, red wine, colored soda drinks, and soya sauce, which easily stain your tooth enamel. Sticky foods also adhere more easily to tooth enamel, causing a layer of stain over top of your tooth, and allowing other foods and drinks to stick to this layer. Regular brushing can avoid this thin layer of fuzziness on top of our teeth.

Another cause of tooth staining and thus discoloration is extreme temperatures. Hot drinks and cold drinks such as coffee, tea, or iced drinks can cause teeth to expand and contract slightly, which allows stains to penetrate the protective layer more easily, as well as causing the pores in the tooth enamel to open and close, and stains to penetrate the tooth enamel. This is very staining, especially since the color in coffee is staining as well.

The stains caused can end up being inside our tooth enamel, rather than just on top.

Another type of food that increases tooth staining is acidic foods.

If you eat or drink foods or drinks which cause tooth enamel staining, try to brush your teeth after each meal or snack.

Foods that help remove or lessen teeth staining

Certain foods can actually help protect your teeth from tooth staining, or help remove some of the yellowing. Green leafy vegetables such as spinach and broccoli, besides being good for your diet and full of nutrients, contain phytochemicals which add a layer of protection to teeth. Just watch out for the spinach caught between your teeth before you go out!

Crunchy foods can also help your teeth look better. The act of eating and chewing crunchy foods help remove stains on teeth through friction, while also being healthy for you and not causing any tooth staining. Crunchy foods such as celery, carrots, and apples can do this.

Water

It is difficult to brush or floss after every meal, so as a substitute, you can rinse your mouth with water. Try chasing your meal or snack with a glass of water, or gargle with water. A quick flush through your teeth works well, as well. Close your teeth and let the water be pushed through your teeth.

About the Author

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