

FIVE-WAY FIX ...

BRIGHT *whites*

Follow these insider tips for getting a Hollywood smile – without the celebrity price tag

1 BLEACH BE GONE

While we all strive for pearly whites, DIY whitening kits can often do more harm than good, says Dr Peter Alldritt from the Australian Dental Association. "Your teeth can become opaque and chalky, losing the natural translucency that makes teeth look attractive," he warns. He says the safest way to whiten is to have a professional scale and clean, as well as cutting back on coffee, tea, red wine and smoking.

2 THE WHITE STUFF

Don't solely rely on toothpaste to fight plaque, tartar or gum disease, cautions Dr Kia Pajouhesh from Smile Solutions (www.smilesolutions.com.au). He says good brushing and flossing habits, along with regular dental check-ups, will help prevent most of these problems occurring in the first place. Prone to sensitivity? Opt for toothpaste formulas with added potassium nitrate or arginine to soothe soreness.

3 CALL IN THE PROS

If brightness is a concern, then consider professional whitening by a dentist. These services use a combination of light and hydrogen peroxide and promise to lighten your smile by up to 14 shades in a single one-hour treatment. (There are

anything from 14 to 28 tooth shades, depending on which dentist you ask.) While there's no downtime, the treatment can be painful and it's best to avoid coloured food and drinks for 24 hours afterwards. Treatments can cost about \$1000, with the results lasting up to two years.

4 EASY DOES IT

Don't scrub too hard when you brush, warns Dr David Dunn of the Macquarie Street Centre (www.macquariestreetdental.com.au). "Aggressive brushing leads to gum recession and abrasion to the necks of the teeth," he explains. An electric toothbrush will reduce that risk, as the head is smaller and you

won't use as much pressure. If you prefer a manual option then choose a soft-bristle brush. "It'll be just as effective for cleaning, but less detrimental to root surfaces and your gumline," says Dr Pajouhesh.

5 WHAT THE EXPERTS DO

They talk the talk, but do they walk the walk? The answer is yes. They floss and brush twice daily and visit the dentist regularly, but Dr Alldritt's secret weapon is to drink plenty of water. "My mouth stays hydrated and this helps to wash away some of the staining beverages I consume," he reveals. And to keep his teeth white, Dr Pajouhesh suggests using toothpastes that contain fluoride.

25%
of Australians
never floss
their teeth*



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