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## Arrowhead Lakes Dentistry Newsletter

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Coffee and cigarettes are two major culprits of teeth discoloration, but there are a number of other surprising teeth tarnishers. Here, Kimberly Harms, D.D.S., of the American Dental Association exposes the top causes of teeth stains and discoloration.

#### Medicine

Some antibiotics and over-the-counter medications can dull your smile. Tetracycline can turn teeth yellow in small children and its derivative, minocycline, can cause a permanent bluish-gray stain in adults. Certain antihistamines can also discolor teeth. Make an appointment with your dentist to discuss all the medications you take (prescription and otherwise) to find out the impact on your teeth and if, in some cases, there are other alternatives.

#### Excessive Fluoride

Fluoride is generally good for your smile but too much of it can cause chalky white spots to appear on your teeth. Although it's rare (and a bigger concern for children than adults), people can get too much fluoride from drinking water with high concentrations of fluoride, or from excessive use of fluoride-containing toothpastes. Use a sensible pea-sized amount of toothpaste each time you brush, suggests Harms.

#### Genetics and Aging

As you get older your teeth have less of a chance of staying paper white. That's because the enamel of your teeth wears thin and the natural yellow or brown color of the underlying dentin layer shows through. You can also thank mom and dad for the intensity of the whiteness of your teeth -- some people just have naturally brighter or thicker enamel than others.

#### Dental Damage

Root canals are not only painful procedures, but over time trauma can cause a tooth to become discolored. Even damage to the teeth from an accident or fall can cause discoloration in both children and adults. "Any time the tooth dies, it may discolor," says Harms.

### Dark Drinks

Coffee and tea are well-known teeth stainers, but many dark liquids, like fruit juice, red wine and soda can also turn teeth yellow. Even beer, which has acidic properties, can damage your smile. "Basically, anything that can stain your carpet can stain your teeth," Harms says. Swig some water around your mouth after drinking dark liquids to offset their staining power. Sipping your drinks through a straw can also help protect your front teeth.

### Colorful Foods

That handful of cherries you've been snacking on may be good for your health, but it can be bad for your teeth because heavily pigmented foods such as blueberries, cranberries and soy sauce quickly stain them. Brush your teeth as soon as you can after eating staining foods.

### Bad Habits

Poor brushing techniques and forgetting to floss means stain-producing substances are not routinely removed from your teeth. Improper teeth care can also allow bacteria to build up on your teeth which can result in yellow and green stains. Harms suggests gently brushing for the length of one song or about three minutes.

Arrowhead Lakes Dentistry will continue its quest to provide the finest dental care as comfortable as possible. Information in this article is provided by Christina Parella of AOL Health.Com. If you have any further questions about the information of this article or any other dental concerns, please visit our [website](#) or give our office a call at 623-362-9616. We would love to answer any questions.

We wish you good health,  
Sincerely,

Ronald Shelley DMD  
Arrowhead Lakes Dentistry PC

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