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Photos: Bad Habits That Age Your Smile

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NEW YORK, Oct. 5 /PRNewswire/ -- By Dr. Michael Apa, DDS, PC

People often connect a dull smile with age. Chips, cracks, and stains on your teeth can add years to your face. However, a bright smile gives the impression of good health, good habits and youth. What you might not know is that many of the external causes of an aging smile are determined by health and lifestyle decisions you make everyday.

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Check out these four habits that lead to an aging smile, and if you're guilty of any of them, learn how to fix them.

Foods and Drinks that Stain Your Teeth - Dark-colored foods and drinks like coffee, soda, red wine, chocolate and ketchup can discolor your teeth causing you to look older than you are. However, there are easy over-the-counter whitening options that can help restore a whiter, more youthful-looking smile. With Crest Whitestrips Advanced Seal, you'll start seeing whitening results in just three days! And the advanced adhesion technology molds the strip securely to your teeth so you can go about your daily routine while you whiten.

Smoking - Smoking not only causes teeth discoloration, but it may also cause bad breath. The Academy of General Dentistry reports that smoking one pack of cigarettes a day can result in the loss of at least two teeth every 10 years. So before whitening your teeth, stop smoking - your smile and body will thank you for it!

Using your Teeth as Tools - Teeth are not built to rip open packages or cut into plastic ties. Chewing on ice cubes is also a no-no. These can cause teeth trauma or breakage that can disrupt the normal growth pattern or source nutrients to your teeth, causing teeth discoloration. So next time you think about opening your mail with your teeth, think again!

Brushing with an Old Toothbrush - Manual toothbrushes become worn out and less effective after about 3 months. Also, if you have gum disease, you should change your toothbrush every 4-6 weeks because bacteria can harbor in the bristles. When you're writing your weekly shopping list, add a new soft-bristled toothbrush. Hard bristles combined with applying too much pressure when brushing can push back your gumline, making your teeth more prone to staining, sensitivity and cavities.

SOURCE Crest; Procter & Gamble Oral Care

Via PR Newswire - PRNewswire.co.uk

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