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Three Sneaky Ways You're Staining Your Teeth

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Swimming in a pool—especially on hot summer days—sipping wine or soda, and opting for a cup of tea vs. coffee to kick your day off right might all be awesome ideas, but they all have the capacity to stain your teeth. Really? Yes. Really.

With Memorial Day coming around the corner, we suggest keeping your mouth closed when taking a swim in the pool. "I see this mostly in avid swimmers, but pool water can create spots on your teeth called swimmers calculus," says Beverly Hills-based cosmetic dentist [Kevin B. Sands](#), DDS, who tends to the teeth of a ton of celebrities, including former Cosmo cover girls [Miley Cyrus](#) and [Kim Kardashian](#). "What happens is the high pH of the chemicals in the pool water causes the proteins in your teeth to harden into a dark brown tartar. And to remove the stains, professional whitening is required." No bueno.

Another surprising way you can wreak havoc on your pearly whites without knowing it: We all know that dark-colored sodas and red wine can stain your teeth, but clear soda and white wine can also do some damage. "Lighter colored beverages are acidic and chromagen-rich and can cause significant staining," says Sands. "The acidity softens the tooth enamel and then sets the stage for further staining."

Lastly, if prefer tea over coffee, don't think you're exempt from staining. "Black tea, for example, is rich in stain-promoting tannins that can cause worse staining than coffee. Try sipping these drinks [and the ones above] through a [straw](#) to minimize the amount of liquid that's actually coming into contact with your teeth," advises Sands.

For more ways to score whiter teeth (and keep them that way), click [here](#).

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Carly Cardellino: I'm the beauty and fashion editor here at Cosmopolitan.com.

I'll try just about anything once (I have the crop cut—my hair used to be super-long—and body wave to prove it) and then report back. I'm obsessed with hair products, like volumizers and salt sprays, as well as mascara, nail polish, a good foundation (right now I'm using Tom Ford Beauty Traceless Foundation SPF 15), and blush (it literally changes the way you look in seconds)—hopefully you can see why I'm in this business. I also love picking out head-to-toe outfits for friends whether they're going on a date with their guy or a black-tie wedding—so feel free to click on that "contact" link below and send me a question.

Leah Wyar: Ladies, I'm the DIY beauty guru. My specialties? Spray-tanning and mastering the at-home manicure. I've tried dozens of spray-tanning formulas and have mastered the art of the self-tan (don't worry, I'll share!). Plus, I paint on the hottest nail trends every week (currently I'm obsessed with the glitter and dark polish trend). Follow me as I branch out and perfect my DIY skills (up next: waxing!).

Marta Topran: I'm obsessed with making my skin as glowy as possible. That means trying out every anti-aging potion out there and never leaving the house without some sort of shimmery highlighter on my cheekbones. I'm also the resident brow and lash addict. Right now, I'm rocking super long lash extensions that I can't believe I ever lived without.