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This Is the Most Effective Way to Get Whiter Teeth

Dentist to the stars Dr. Kevin Sands on whitening strips, charcoal, lip glosses and in-office treatments.



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BY ALEXANDRA TUNELL APR 5, 2016

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Question: How can I get whiter teeth by tonight, and with more time, what's the safest, gentlest and most effective approach for white teeth all year long?

Answer: No one knows good smiles like [Dr. Kevin Sands](#), the cosmetic dentist who tends to just about every famous mouth in Hollywood and stars on the Netflix series *Celebrity Plastic Surgeons of Beverly Hills*. Below, his advice on what works the quickest, the best—and not at all.

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If you have an hour... "Crest WhiteStrips are the best option," says Sands. Don't bother with lip glosses that promise a whitening effect—"it's just a gimmick"—and instead wear a bright lipstick (just not an orange-toned shade) to give the illusion of a brighter smile.

Skip: Hydrogen peroxide whitening pens. "The results, if any, are so subtle, and the con is that without a tray, the bleaching agent is rubbed off too quickly to actually do anything significant."

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If you have 24 hours..."In-office [Zoom Whitening](#) is the fastest and best way to get big results in a short amount of time," says Sands. Even for those with sensitive teeth, there are no real downsides, as opposed to at-home whitening, since each treatment is customized to the individual's mouth and a technician is there to protect your gums and skin. Limit your treatments to once or twice a year, with touch-ups as needed.

If you have a week...Do the above, plus add extra baking soda to your toothpaste.

Buy: A [Philips Sonicare DiamondClean](#). It's the gold standard of toothbrushes, according to nearly every dentist we've asked.

If you have a month...Do the above, plus brush with [activated charcoal](#) three to four times per week and gargle with coconut oil to pull out deep tooth stains naturally. "It won't make a difference by 'bleaching' per se, but the lauric acid in coconut oil can rid your teeth of bacteria found in plaque that can make them yellow. It is also supposed to promote gum health, and help keep your breath fresh," says Sands.

Skip: Using at-home whitening strips more than twice a year. "You can overdue it and create overly sensitized teeth. Stripping too much enamel can not only damage your teeth, but also your gums, plus some at-home whitening products can result in an artificial white that doesn't look natural."

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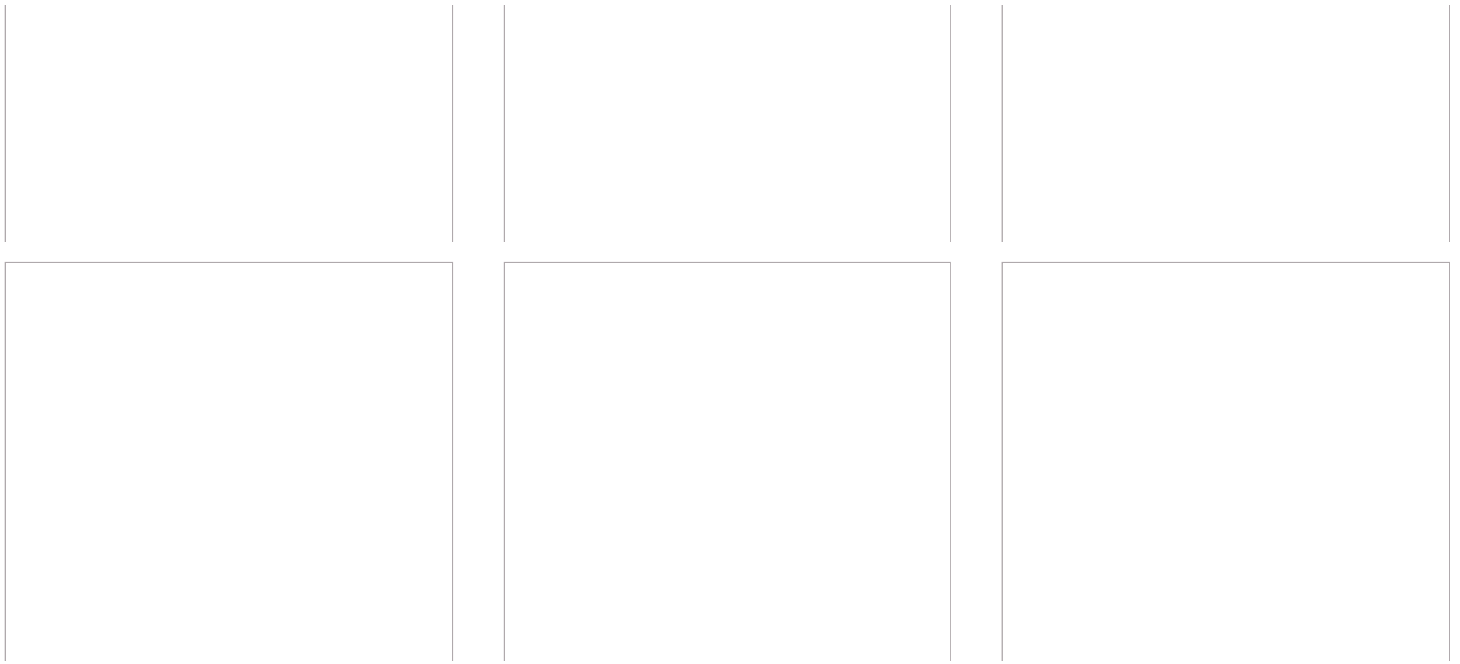
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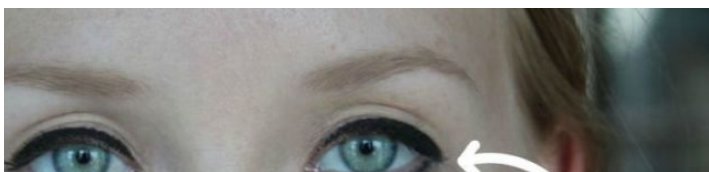
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