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STRAIGHT



TALK

No A-lister is blessed with naturally perfect teeth. **Courtney Dunlop** dissects Hollywood's biggest antiaging secret—and it has nothing to do with needles

There is endless talk of celebrities and their forever-youthful faces and toned bodies. But being well on the other side of 30 with nary a wrinkle or bulge in sight is only part of the story: A much-less-discussed weapon in the aging arsenal? Their dental work.

Teeth naturally show wear and tear over time—stains, chips, and flattened shapes from chewing and grinding are all equal-opportunity signs of aging. No one—not even genetically blessed models and celebrities—can avoid it, so you can pretty much guarantee that anyone past 29 with a “perfect” smile has had cosmetic dentistry work done, most likely in the form of porcelain veneers. Just add it to the list of status symbols, up there with injected foreheads, barre-sculpted bums, and blown-out hair. In this era of women striving to have it all and look good while doing it, we want in on the megawatt smile game, too.

At his chic NYC office, superstar cosmetic dentist Dr. Michael Apa tends to the pearly whites of stars such as Chloë Sevigny and Lea Michele, and even jets to his thriving practice in Dubai on the regular, where he treats members of the royal family. “We can do just about anything with veneers,” says Apa, who uses the thin pieces of tooth-shaped porcelain that are bonded to existing teeth to reshape ground-down teeth, cover stains and cracks, and even reposition crooked teeth and relieve the crowding that most people assume can only be treated with braces or clear aligners. “Shifting starts to appear in your late 20s and early 30s, just as you’re beginning the prime of your career,” says Apa. In other words, just as you start killing it at the office and needing to look especially polished, “you’re clenching, grinding, putting more pressure on your teeth,” he explains. Veneers

can also reset your bite so you’re not further pushing your teeth into misalignment.

But it’s not just about the teeth. People subconsciously associate gum loss with aging—without really understanding what they’re seeing. “Starting in your 30s, you begin to lose the triangle of gum between the teeth and you get what I call black triangles,” Apa says. A telltale sign is if you’re noticing food getting stuck in your teeth where it didn’t before. “The way that we place the veneers, we pinch off the black triangle so it looks like where the gum meets the tooth is thick and full like it was when you were 20,” he says.

The overall effect of this smile makeover wizardry is profound—Apa’s Instagram feed (@doctorapa) is an endless scroll of remarkable before-and-afters. But, of course, the key is getting natural-looking veneers. You must—must!—see pictures of a dentist’s work before committing, and if you see flat, white, Chiclet-like teeth, run far away. “Master ceramist” Jason Kim hand-creates gorgeous porcelain veneers for Apa and other top dentists to install. The best veneers, Kim says, are milky-white like expensive china; he layers ceramics so there’s a density on the bottom and translucency on top, just like real teeth.

All this work and attention to detail comes at a cost—we’re talking \$1,000 to \$3,500 per tooth. But Kim points out that it’s not just about vanity: “Enamel wears away; the tooth structure changes. Eventually, it leads to tooth loss in old age. It’s better to rebuild the teeth into normal shapes and with the best functionality when you still have natural tooth structure to work with. It gets harder and harder to restore the longer you put it off.” Hmm, maybe that Bali vacation can wait—suddenly we want to put our money where our mouth is. **mc**

FOR THE GRIN
Instant, at-home antiaging tooth boosters

APA BEAUTY
Pink Oral
Gel, \$25



TULIP Paste
in Coconut
Mint, \$6



QUIP Metal
Electric
Toothbrush
and Refill
Plan, \$40 for
starter set.



GLO SCIENCE
Brilliant
Personal Teeth
Whitening
Device in
Ginger Gold,
\$200.



For information on where to buy, see Shopping Directory

BRIGHT STARS

In Hollywood, A-list cosmetic dental work is as ubiquitous as green juice and selfies. Here, a gallery of (potentially-altered) pearly whites



Hilary
Duff, 2016.
BELOW: In
2002



Demi Moore,
2003.
BELOW: In
1982



Alessandra
Ambrosio,
2015.
BELOW: In
2002



Jennifer
Hudson,
2015.
BELOW: In
2006

