

Featured

# Will activated charcoal really whiten your teeth?

Activated charcoal seems to be the latest buzz in the beauty industry. If you are a social media user, you may have seen videos of people brushing their teeth with black paste revealing a white smile afterwards. Health food stores are starting to stock all forms of charcoal powders and tablets now due to this latest craze. But is it an effective and safe way to whiten your teeth?

Activated charcoal has been used as a medicine to treat poisoning for over 150 years and has made it to the World Health Organization's list of essential medicines<sup>[ref. 1]</sup>. It earned a reputation as being safe, easily available and inexpensive medication. In England during the 19th century charcoal biscuits were popular as a relief from indigestion and flatulence. Now many pharmacies sell them in tablet form for the same purpose.

Activated charcoal is made from common purified charcoal by heating it in the

presence of gas. As a result, the charcoal develops internal spaces and pores giving it a large surface area and absorptive properties. These unique properties make activated charcoal (also known as activated carbon) a great multi-purpose substance that can also be used to purify water and absorb odours<sup>[ref. 2]</sup>.

But can it be used to whiten teeth?

Due to its abrasive nature it has a potential to remove some surface staining. However it won't change the actual colour



- 1** **Featured**  
Activated charcoal
- 2** **Handy Hygiene Hints**  
Change your toothbrush
- 2** **News**  
Michael is the temporary Tom
- 2** **Team**  
Goodbye

### This month...

*Activated charcoal has been circling social media as the latest alternative to teeth whitening. In our feature, we'll be discussing just how effective activated charcoal is and whether or not it will benefit your dental hygiene in the long run.*

*Kat asks "When was the last time you replaced your toothbrush?" Find out if it's time for you to say hello to a new one!*

*Tom our specialist will be away from the studio for the next 10 weeks—read our news snippet to see who's filling in.*

*Lastly, be sure to say your goodbyes when you're next in—read on to learn who's sadly leaving the team.*

Dr Simon Franks





References:

1. WHO List of Essential Medicines. <http://bit.ly/2lpJaNw>
2. What's trending: charcoal. <http://bit.ly/2IZD03B>

of the tooth enamel despite some of the manufacturer's claims that charcoal will "draw out stains from your teeth". If you have no external staining on your teeth it won't do anything to improve the colour.

Charcoal products haven't been approved by the Dental Association and long-term use can cause excessive tooth wear and sensitivity due to the abrasive nature. Once the tooth structure is gone it cannot repair itself so it is

best to stick to the tried and tested methods of tooth whitening. Furthermore accidental inhalation of charcoal powder can cause a serious damage to your lungs, so proceed with caution!

If you would like to improve the shade or remove staining from your teeth in safe an effective manner, don't hesitate to have a chat to us about it. Here, at Bite Dental Studios, we are more than happy to discuss all available options.

*Healthy Hygiene Hints*

**How often should I replace my toothbrush?**

Your toothbrush should be replaced every three to four months. Over time bristles of the toothbrush become frayed and distorted making it less effective at cleaning your teeth.

So if your bristles start to bend in different directions, it is time to chuck it out! Plus over time it traps particles of food, toothpaste and plaque causing bacteria to grow on your toothbrush.

*Kat*



News

Meet Michael, our temporary Tom.

Tom, our specialist dentist who does most of the extractions at Bite Dental, is heading to Charleville for ten weeks to provide rural population with his services. For the next couple of months we will have Dr. Michael Burgess doing our wisdom teeth extractions.

Team

Goodbye

It is time for us to say goodbye to our little Scottish thistle Christie who is moving to Sydney to continue her Australian adventure. We wish her the best of luck and safe travels. Stay tuned to find out who our new team member will be with big shoes to fill!

Celebrate everyday heros. Let us know if you have a cause you'd like us to shout about.

