



Health
& Beauty

Improve Your Smile

Your smile is obviously something you're born with, but from minor corrective surgeries to adult braces, there are still plenty of things you can do to improve it.

James A. Vito, D.M.D., an advanced restorative, cosmetic and implant dentists based in Pennsylvania, noted there are several things a dental professional can do to get your smile shining like it should.

WHITER TEETH

This is the most obvious one. Vito notes in-home teeth whitening kits aren't as effective as the teeth whitening services your dentist offers.

"In fact, your teeth may be as much as eight shades whiter after a whitening session at your dentist's office," he wrote.

Vito also noted dental veneers are another option for brightening your smile. Veneers are thin porcelain shells that fit over the front of your teeth and can hide dull teeth. They can also come in handy if you're looking to cover chipped, uneven, crooked, or oddly shaped teeth. They can also mask gaps between teeth.

STRONGER TEETH

If you have a tooth that has become weak, Vito notes there are some steps to take that can keep the tooth from completely breaking under the weakened strain of cracks and previous root canals. He



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said adding a porcelain crown strengthens the tooth and prevents further damage. Crowns completely cover your tooth and are permanently attached with dental cement.

Replace a missing tooth

Along with the potential appearance issue, Vito noted a missing tooth can cause all

kinds of other problems — most notably your bite may be affected, which can make it more difficult to chew, and further tooth loss can occur as other teeth drift to fill the open space. Visiting a local cosmetic dentist can help, as they offer several ways to replace a missing tooth,

including bridges, dentures and implants.

STRAIGHTENING UP YOUR SMILE

If your teeth need a bit of direction, Vito noted dentists can improve the appearance of crooked teeth with orthodontics. The process includes

metal or ceramic braces, which attach to your teeth and gradually move them into the proper alignment. Along with traditional braces, some cases are eligible for the less-intrusive Invisalign system, which uses clear removable liners to shift teeth to the correct position.

Repair Damaged Hair

Keeping your hair shiny and healthy can be harder than it looks — and with so many products out there claiming to do it all — it can also get confusing.

Luckily, the American Academy of Dermatology has some tips and tricks to keep your locks luscious.

The academy notes that when hair is damaged, the protective lipid layer of fat on the outside of the cuticle (which makes hair shiny) is removed. How does that happen? Chemical damage is one of the most common causes of hair damage, leading to dried-out, frizzy hair that can look dull and not hold a style.

WHAT TO DO

Speaking to the academy, dermatologist Zoe D. Draelos, MD, FAAD, noted a few things that can go a long way toward avoiding, and repairing, that damage.

- He recommended using conditioning shampoos and conditioners regularly to improve the appearance of frizzy hair. 2-in-1 shampoos that remove oil from the scalp, clean the hair, then condition the hair in the rinse phase also are good choices.

- He also recommended products containing dimethicone, which is available in shampoos, conditioners, sprays and creams. This ingredient has been shown to decrease static electricity,



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increase shine and improve manageability.

- An obvious one: Stop dyeing your hair and opt for hair's natural hair color instead. If you feel you must dye, try to stay “on shade” within three shades of your natural color, to lessen the chemical affect.

LOOK OUT FOR HEAT

Heat is another major factor leading to unhealthy hair, as too much heat can turn the natural water in your hair into steam, which leads to frizzy ends that can easily break. It can also cause your hair to even smell burnt. Put simply, Draelos said too

much heat can “cook” your hair. To fix and avoid those problems, he recommended:

- Allow hair to air dry when possible.
- When using a hairdryer, do not use the highest heat setting immediately. Work your way up.
- When straightening hair

with a ceramic iron, put a moist towel in the device to protect the hair from direct heat.

- Moisturizing your hair regularly will help the appearance of heat damaged hair, but he noted stopping the source of heat damage is essential.

Get Fabulous Feet

With spring and summer just around the corner, it's almost time to go barefoot on the beach, or dig out the sandals for warmer weather.

To make sure your feet are ready for their (literal) time in the sun, The American Pediatric Medical Association has some tips to get ready. Here are their top recommendations:

THE DO'S OF FOOT CARE

- Salon foot baths are typically cleanest earlier in the day, so schedule your appointment in the A.M. If you're not a morning person, make sure that the salon filters and cleans the foot bath between clients.
- When eliminating calluses, on the heel, ball and sides of the feet, use a pumice stone, foot file or exfoliating scrub. Soak feet in warm water for at least five minutes, then use the stone, scrub, or foot file to gently smooth calluses and other rough patches.

- Bring your own pedicure utensils to the salon, because bacteria and fungus can move easily from one person to the next if the salon doesn't use proper sterilization techniques.

- When trimming your nails, use a toenail clipper with a straight edge to ensure your toenail is cut straight across. Other tools, such as manicure scissors or fingernail clippers, increase the risk of ingrown toenails because of their

small, curved shape. Also: See a podiatrist if you have a tendency to develop ingrown toenails.

THE DON'TS OF FOOT CARE

- Resist the urge to shave your legs before receiving a pedicure. Freshly shaved legs

or small cuts on your legs may allow bacteria to enter. If you are receiving a pedicure and manicure, don't use the same tools for both services as bacteria and fungus can transfer between fingers and toes.

- Don't allow technicians to use a foot razor to remove dead skin. Using a razor can

result in permanent damage if used incorrectly and can easily cause infection if too much skin is removed.

- Don't round the edges of your toenails. This type of shape increases the chances that painful ingrown toenails will develop.

- Don't use sharp tools to

clean under nails. Using anything sharp makes it easy to puncture the skin, leaving it vulnerable to infection.

- Be sure that you don't leave any moisture between toes. Anything left behind can promote the development of athlete's foot or a fungal infection.



Skin Care Basics

Your skin is literally the biggest organ in (or on) your body, so it's important to take care of it. So where should you start?

SIGNS YOUR SKIN IS STARTING TO AGE

The Cleveland Clinic points to some key warning signs to look out for when your skin starts to age. They include rough, dry, and itchy skin; the loss of elastic tissue, which causes your skin to slack and hang loosely; thinning skin that becomes more transparent; fragile skin that flattens; skin that is more easily bruised; skin that is more prone to developing skin lesions, such as non-cancerous (benign) tumors.

USE SUNSCREEN

The Mayo Clinic notes one of the most important, and most obvious, ways to protect your skin is to wear sunscreen. The clinic recommends using a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15. Apply sunscreen generously, and reapply every two hours — or more often if you're swimming or perspiring. Along with sunscreen, you should also seek out shade and avoid the sun between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., when the sun's rays are strongest.

When in the sun for a long time, you should also cover your skin with tightly woven long-sleeved shirts, long pants and wide-brimmed hats. There



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are also laundry additives, which can give clothing an additional layer of ultraviolet protection for a certain number of washings.

DON'T SMOKE

This is a big one. The clinic notes smoking can make your skin look older and contributes

to wrinkles. Why? Smoking narrows the tiny blood vessels in the outermost layers of skin, which decreases blood flow. This depletes the skin of oxygen and nutrients that are important to skin health. Along with blood vessel issues, smoking also damages collagen and elastin in your skin.

TAKE IT EASY ON YOUR SKIN

Keep your baths short. Hot water and long showers or baths remove oils from your skin. Keep the bath short, and be sure to just use warm — as opposed to hot — water. Also avoid strong soaps, which can strip oil from your skin.

Instead, choose mild cleansers.

Shave carefully, and be careful to protect and lubricate your skin. You should always use a clean, sharp razor and shave in the direction the hair grows, not against it.

If your skin is dry, use a moisturizer that fits your skin type.

Common Makeup Mistakes

Taking care of your skin is one thing, but you also need to take care with the things you put on your skin.

To provide some tips, Mai Quynh, makeup artist, mark cosmetics expert; and Mally Roncal, makeup artist; founder of Mally Beauty, chatted with WebMD about the basics.

CHOOSE YOUR FOUNDATION IN NATURAL LIGHT

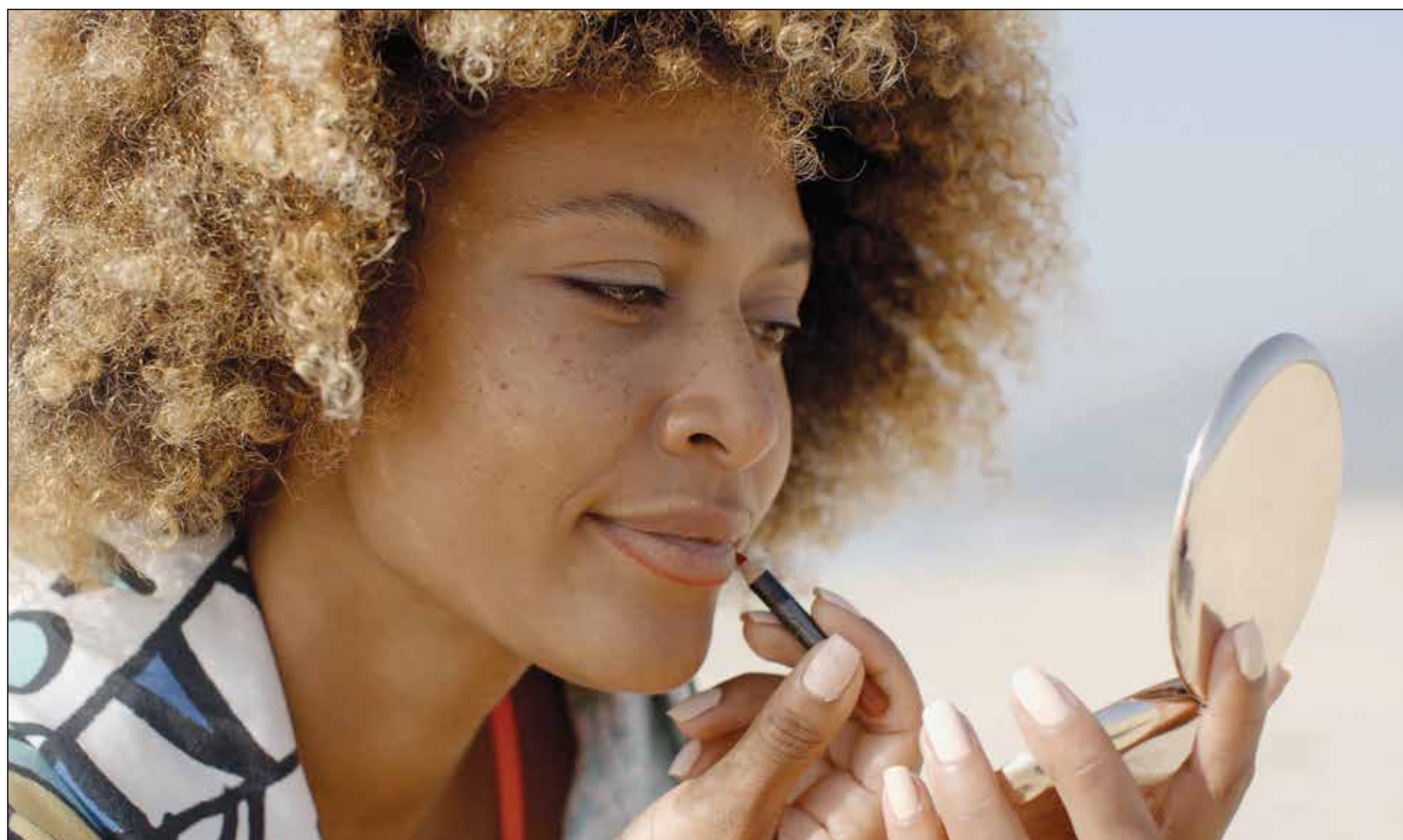
When picking a foundation, be sure to look at it in natural light. “Go by the window when you’re in a store,” Quynh said “Or ask if you can borrow a hand mirror and just step outside.” You should also do your shopping without foundation on, to see how it matches against your skin.

SHOULD YOU USE AN EYEBROW PENCIL?

Quynh says most women can use eyebrow powder or matte eye shadow on their eyebrows, where eyebrow pencil gives you a more defined look that can be harsh or severe. She recommends looking for a shade that’s a little lighter than your hair. For example, if you have dark brown hair with caramel highlights, pick a color that falls in between.

WEAR BRONZER WHERE THE SUN HITS YOUR FACE

Instead of putting bronzer on all over your face, focus on



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the area where the sun hits it. “I like to apply it all over the perimeter of the face, then dust a little across the forehead, bridge of the nose, and chin,” Roncal said.

HOW TO HIDE DARK CIRCLES

If you’re looking to conceal

dark circles under your eyes, Quynh recommends using a concealer one shade lighter than your skin color. Blend it well to prevent telltale white circles under your eyes.

TINTED MOISTURIZER CAN REPLACE FOUNDATION

For some women, Quynh

says a tinted moisturizer offers enough coverage. It hydrates and evens out your skin, while foundation puts on a layer of color and gives you more coverage.

Tinted moisturizer is always better than foundation that’s heavy or cakey, she said.

BLUSH TIP

To find the right balance with blush, just smile. “Smile in the mirror to find the apples of your cheeks,” Roncal suggests. “Swirl the blush onto the apples, then sweep back toward the ears.” Use a brush to apply and blend in the blush for a softer look.

Foods Rich in Antioxidants

Tweaking your diet can not only keep your weight down, but also protect your cells from damage. Antioxidants, such as vitamins C and E, and carotenoids, may help protect cells from damage caused by free radicals.

Plant-based foods are the best sources, including fruits, vegetables and their juices, whole-grain products, nuts, seeds, herbs and spices, and even chocolate.

EAT SOME BERRIES AND FRUIT

The clinic notes blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, strawberries and cranberries are among the top fruit sources of antioxidants.

Pears and many apple varieties (with peel) are also good sources for antioxidants. Grapes and most citrus fruits are also good options, along with stone fruits such as peaches, nectarines, apricots, cherries, plums and prunes. Tropical fruits like bananas, kiwis, mangos, papaya and pineapples are also good.

DON'T FORGET YOUR VEGGIES

Artichokes, okra, kale and bell peppers top the list of vegetables high in antioxidants, according to the clinic. Other options include asparagus, broccoli, red cabbage and tomatoes. Sweet potatoes and red and russet potatoes are also good sources of antioxidants too.

ADD IN SOME NUTS

The clinic notes walnuts, pistachios, pecans, hazelnuts and almonds are some of the top nuts for antioxidant content. You can also try sunflower seeds, sesame seeds or ground flaxseed in recipes. Legumes — such as kidney beans, edamame and lentils — are also loaded with antioxidants.

DRINK UP SOME JUICE, WINE, TEA AND COFFEE (IN MODERATION)

Pomegranate juice is high in antioxidants, along with drinks like red wine, tea and coffee in moderation.

However you add antioxidants to your diet, the clinic notes no one food

or food group should be your sole focus. Instead, be sure to incorporate a variety of fruits, vegetables, nuts and legumes into your diet.

CHOCOLATE IS ALSO GOOD

It might seem counterintuitive, but the right kinds of chocolate can also be

a major health benefit. The Cleveland Clinic notes cocoa and dark chocolate have a wide variety of antioxidants. Of course, super-sweet processed chocolate loses many of its actual health advantages. Natural chocolate, complete with its somewhat bitter taste, is the safe way to go.



Treatment for Varicose Veins

Varicose veins are swollen, twisted veins that you can see just under the skin. They usually occur in the legs, but also can form in other parts of the body. Hemorrhoids are a type of varicose vein.

Why do they occur? Your veins have one-way valves that help keep blood flowing toward your heart. But, if those valves are weak or damaged, blood can back up and pool in your veins. This causes the veins to swell.

So what are some treatment options, both at-home and professional?

SELF-CARE

The Mayo Clinic notes that self-care — such as exercising, losing weight, not wearing tight clothes, elevating your legs, and avoiding long periods of standing or sitting — can go a long way toward preventing varicose veins from getting worse.

TRY COMPRESSION STOCKINGS

The clinic notes that wearing compression stockings all day is often the first approach to try before moving on to more serious treatments. These stockings steadily squeeze your legs, helping veins and leg muscles move blood more efficiently. The amount of compression varies by type and brand. If interested, you can buy compression stockings at most pharmacies and medical supply stores. Prices vary. Prescription-strength

stockings also are available.

LASER SURGERIES

Doctors are now using new technology in laser treatments to close off smaller varicose veins and spider veins, according to the clinic. Laser surgery works by sending strong bursts of light onto the vein, which makes the vein slowly fade and disappear. No incisions or needles are used.

AMBULATORY PHLEBECTOMY

The American Society of Dermatologic Surgery notes ambulatory phlebectomy is an outpatient procedure developed by dermatologic surgeons that removes superficial veins through small, slit-like incisions in the skin. Before performing the procedure, dermatologists will usually review a patient's medical history and conduct a physical exam. The doctor will determine if the varicose veins are the main problem, or are they connected to other veins that may need to be treated first? Are there clots in the superficial or deep veins that may need to be addressed? Are other procedures needed in addition to ambulatory phlebectomy?