



PRESS RELEASE

Does Caffeine Stain Teeth?

Sacramento, CA — October 26, 2017 — Caffeine is a common ingredient in many popular drinks known to [stain the teeth](#): coffee, tea and cola are all examples. So is caffeine contributing to the staining? Will drinking decaffeinated beverages prevent or lessen staining? These questions were posed on the website of the Sacramento Dentistry Group.

What Color is Caffeine?

When caffeine is isolated from its vegetable sources, it is a white, odorless powder. Caffeine dissolves in fluids and lends little coloration to the liquid, as seen in soft drinks that are clear, but still contain caffeine. What's more, caffeine is not a chromogen — a molecule that dyes or stains other substances. Therefore, it is not responsible for stained teeth. Asking for decaf will not keep your teeth from going yellow! Instead, dental patients need to consider just what is causing the stains on their enamel.

Chromogens and Tannins Do Cause Stains

The primary staining agents in coffee are the aforementioned chromogens. These molecules alter the color of things they contact. And while tooth enamel seems smooth, at the microscopic level it contains pits, craters, and tiny cracks that trap chromogens. Colas contain the same pigments, either from added coloration or simply the natural pigments of any included plant ingredients. As more chromogens are trapped in the teeth, the enamel becomes darker.

Teas feature a different staining pigment called tannin. In its natural state, tannin is part of a plant's defenses against insects and other herbivores. It tastes somewhat bitter and is unpleasant to many animals. For humans, it contributes to tea's flavor, color and its power to stain teeth, much like chromogens.

There are many arguments about the medical benefits and disadvantages of consuming caffeine. It is beyond the scope of this press release to discuss all of these. It is sufficient, however, simply to state that caffeine does not stain the teeth. The addiction to this stimulant does motivate people to drink the things that contain it, and those beverages generally do stain the teeth. So do wine, berries, and many other foods and drinks that contain dark pigments, but no caffeine.

The good news is that [professional tooth whitening](#) at a dental office easily removes these stains and returns tooth enamel to its original color. The Sacramento Dentistry Group provides this [cosmetic service](#). For more information about tooth whitening, contact the Sacramento Dentistry Group at 916-538-6900, or via their website at sacramentodentistry.com.