

Are Whitening Strips Safe?

“I told my dentist my teeth are going yellow. He told me to wear a brown tie.”

-Rodney Dangerfield.

Okay, maybe Rodney’s dentist should have his license revoked, but admittedly, yellowing teeth is a problem many of us encounter sooner or later. Truth be told, it’s almost unavoidable, because it’s not like you can stop taking coffee or tea, can you? Those two drinks in particular go a long way in painting your teeth yellow.

Anytime you wake up in the morning and stand in front of the bathroom mirror, a yellow-toothed smile awaits you. Whenever you yawn, some cheeky friend jokes about your yellow dentition (and maybe horrible breath). The joke doesn’t end there too, because even a conventional toothpaste and brush can do very little to get rid of your shiny, yellow teeth. It ends up being a nuisance that keeps nagging at you like an itch.

So what do you do? You try something different of course. Technology, innovation and the tenacity of humans to have perfect, sparkling, white teeth have conceived so many ways of improving dental hygiene. You have a myriad of options to choose from, and the best part of it all? Most of them are affordable, so those of you with deep and empty pockets need not worry.

On this very lovely day, we’re going to talk about one of the simplest yet most effective means of keeping your teeth white and fabulous. Have you ever heard of a little something called ‘white strip’? If you haven’t, come sit down and allow us brush away your ignorance.

White Strip? What is That?

For the uninitiated, white strips are essentially disposable plastic strips that contain a whitening, enamel-friendly gel which contains carbamide peroxide or hydrogen peroxide. You place the gel-side of the white strips on your teeth and watch them do wonders.



Hitting the market in the year 2001, white strips have been patronized since their launch. They have known nothing but success ever since, and with good reason. As the years pass by and advancement in technology opens up doors to new innovations, different makes of white strips have seen the light of the day.

Numerous companies have adopted the technology and passed out their own brands of white strips. Some of the biggest names in dental care offer them: Oral B, Crest, Colgate, Kroger, many more.

Perhaps the most popular brand of white strips are the Crest 3D white strips, but that's to be expected. After all, the technology was pioneered by Proctor and Gamble under their 'Crest' brand. Even more impressive is the variety of white strip products available. You see each one has been tailored for the customers' needs, such as sensitive teeth for example. Simply pick one up, depending on which one suits you.

You would think everyone would be happy to step into a store and see white strips lining shelves, but no; there is still an appreciable percentage of wary people out there who question just how safe white strips really are. Let's find out if their fears are unwarranted or not, shall we?

Are White Strips Really Safe?

The simple and short answer is yes. White strips are completely safe, but only if you follow the guidelines on how to use them. And make sure you buy original white strips, because many of the types out there are cheap copies that do more harm than good.

Any other adverse effect from using white strips comes from improper handling or usage, nothing else—we'll get into that a little bit later on. If you won't take our word on the safety and efficacy of white strips, perhaps a few words from a doctor might convince you.

In 2009, Dr. Papas, together with her colleagues from Tufts University, Boston, conducted a study to see if white strips truly do what they were intended to do. The study had volunteers applying white strips twice a day for 30 minutes each. And the results? Hear it from the good doctor herself.

"In this study," Dr. Papas said, "all of the subjects in the peroxide strip group had objectively measured tooth whitening (reduction in yellowness and increased brightness), and the magnitude of the whitening increased with continued whitening strip use."

Well that's settled then, isn't it? Many dentists and doctors have attempted similar studies and they all arrive at the same conclusion, white strips - safe. That much is fact. Hydrogen peroxide, among other things, is a bleaching agent that whitens your teeth. It has been tried and tested to make sure it is harmless yet effective.

However, we have to point out that not all white strips contain hydrogen peroxide and as such, may not be as safe as those that do. Some white strips contain a certain percentage of chlorine (the same chemical used in pools to kill harmful organisms). We don't recommend using those because chlorine is hazardous to teeth.

As long as you follow proper instructions on how to use white strips written on the packs, you're good to go, but if you need further clarification, a visit to your local dentist should help. Problems arise when you misuse the strips. Having said that, we'll give you a few tips on what to do before you set out to buy a few packs of Crest 3D white strips.

✓ **What Does Your Dentist Say?**

Whatever you do, don't go to Rodney Dangerfield's dentist. If you do, you're on your own. Go see a proper dentist and make enquiries. Make sure you know fully well how and when to use white strips.

The irony is, many dentists out there won't advise you to use white strips on your own. They would rather suggest alternatives and tell you that you're better off with them. This isn't true, because whitestrips are as effective as any treatment a dentist can give.

✓ **Make the Right Choice When You Shop**

Most white strips contain carbon peroxide in levels ranging between 10% to 20%, which is more than adequate to whiten teeth. You can try strips with higher levels for fast and excellent results. Again, this is where your dentist's expertise comes in.

✓ **Heed Instructions**

We can't stress how important it is for you to follow the instructions given on the white strips' packs on how to apply them. Crest 3D white strips can be left wrapped over your teeth for 5 or 30 minutes. It depends on what the instructions say and the effect you desire. Under no circumstance should you let them exceed the time they are supposed to be in your mouth. Doing so could lead to sore gums or other complicated matters.

✓ **Sensitive Teeth Need Special Attention**

Sensitive teeth sometimes react differently to Crest 3D white strips. No harm will come to such teeth; maybe slight irritations but they never last long. It's for this reason we stock a variant of white strips that's specifically designed to cater to sensitive: The Crest 3D Gentle Routine and Classic Vivid - see, we got you covered on all sides.

✓ **Know When to Stop**

There is such a thing as 'too much of a good thing', you know? As great as white strips are, you have to understand there's a limit to how often you should use them. Most dentists advise monthly usage, but when exactly are you supposed to stop using the strips altogether?

That depends on you and the products you choose. There are white strips that whiten your teeth after just a mere month's usage, but the effects can last for half or even a full year.

Then there are also strips that you can stop using once your teeth reach a shade you're happy with. If such is the case, simply apply the strips once a year-or much less-before you stop. After that, put the white strips aside. They've done their job.

Well, that's about it. That's the low-down on how to use white strips and whether they are safe or not. We're sure you must be convinced by now. We use them all the time, and so do millions of people the world over. Don't be slow in joining the bandwagon or it might eventually run you over.

White strips, Crest 3D white strips, 3D white strips; regardless what catches your eye, give it a try. They are so many great products that give great results, but remember, the manner in which you use them will determine whether your teeth see a brand new glow, or if they remain as yellow as the sun. So, flip open a pack of white strips and give them a try. It's either that or do what Rodney's dentist says (wear a brown tie). Your choice.