

Holiday Glamour

A Holiday Gift For You & Yours: A Celebrity-Caliber Smile

(NAPSA)—Looking to get a megawatt smile this holiday season that could put Julia Roberts' choppers to shame? Want to give the gift of a coveted Hollywood grin that beams almost as brightly as the paparazzi's flashbulbs? Join the crowd. Teeth whitening procedures continue to be a hot consumer craze, with about 100 million people spending an estimated \$2.3 billion on teeth whitening products and services in 2003, according to the American Dental Association.

From over-the-counter whiteners to professional teeth whitening treatments, there's a dizzying array of choices for Americans who are striving for that celebrity-caliber smile, especially during the holiday party season. But for those still unsure if teeth whitening products or procedures are right for them or appropriate as a gift-giving idea, there are other options that should brighten holiday spirits.

Shoppers can opt for tried-and-true tools like power toothbrushes, which claim to naturally whiten teeth by helping remove stains. Plus, if you pursue a whitening treatment, a power toothbrush helps maintain that investment. A recent university-based study on teeth whitening concluded that the Sonicare power toothbrush maintains the effects of teeth whitening treatments significantly longer than an ordinary manual toothbrush for six months after treatment.

So if good oral health is just as



The average person can attain a celebrity smile with a teeth whitening procedure, but a power toothbrush is what maintains that mega-watt look.

important to you as a brighter smile, then power toothbrushes deliver results. One of the newest on the market that incorporates advanced sonic technology is the Sonicare Elite (\$139.99; [www.sonicare.com](http://www sonicare.com)). Its built-in timer encourages the celebrity in you to brush for two full minutes, as dental professionals recommend, and brush all areas of the mouth.

"Even with an effective whitening regimen, the length of time a person keeps those results depends on how well they take care of their teeth, avoiding coffee, tea, wine and other staining agents and using dental professional-recommended tools like a power toothbrush," said Dr. James Dunn, DDS.

Dr. Dunn shares a few tips for those in search of a true Hollywood (and healthy) smile this holiday season:

1. Whatever route you take to a brighter smile, don't forget basic maintenance. Brush at least twice a day (two minutes with a power toothbrush and three to five with a manual brush), floss daily and visit your dental professional twice a year for check-ups.

2. When selecting a power toothbrush, look for the latest sonic technology. The investment you make in your toothbrush can have a lasting effect on your overall health.

3. If you're shopping for retail whiteners, read the labels before you buy. Products with carbamide peroxide will work better than those with just hydrogen peroxide, though results vary.

4. The American Dental Association states that both at-home and professionally applied teeth whiteners may cause temporary tooth sensitivity and occasional gum irritation. They recommend consulting a dental professional for the most appropriate treatment, especially if you have fillings, crowns or dark stains.

"A sparkling white smile can help you look and feel like a movie star," concludes Dr. Dunn. "Getting true pearly whites can be achieved through various methods, but nothing takes the place of proper daily brushing and flossing."