

# NEWS!

## Brightening ingredients in oral-care products are sabotaging smiles

**A**mericans currently spend \$1.8 billion annually on oral-care and tooth-whitening products only to discover that, in many cases, a brighter smile comes at an even greater cost. That's because up to 20 percent of the population will experience a negative reaction to their toothpaste, thanks to chemical ingredients designed to whiten teeth, fight tartar and freshen breath, says

Bruce Hartley, D.D.S., of the Peninsula Center of Cosmetic Dentistry in Los Altos, California. "And as more chemicals are being added to pastes to boost their market value, the risk of reactions, including tooth sensitivity, canker sores and gum erosion and inflammation, is on the rise," he warns. The good news: Safeguarding oral health—and maintaining a confident smile—is as simple as sidestepping two particularly sneaky ingredients.

### Avoid high abrasives to prevent tooth and gum damage

All toothpastes contain abrasives designed to whiten teeth and fight tartar. However, a variety of white toothpastes with high concentrations of abrasives can cause damage to the teeth and gums.

**Read this before you buy your next tube of toothpaste.**

says Jerome Vitalone, D.D.S., of Smile Design & York. The safest are formulas that have a relative dentin abrasion index of a low of 0 to a high of 100. Where your brush has a "low abrasion" or "medium abrasion," not all products are created equal. The toll-free number is 1-800-368-3683.

### Skip cinnamon to dodge dry mouth

Many cinnamon-flavored toothpastes get their zing from cinnamyl compounds and agents derived from cinnamon and tree bark. But that 90 percent of toothpaste-induced sensitivity, an allergic reaction that can cause chapped lips and a burning feeling in the mouth. "Cinnamate reactions are detectable after just a few uses of a cinnamon-flavored product," notes Clifford Williams, D.M.D., a dentist in New York City. "Switching to another flavor often resolves the problem within 24 hours."

### Sparkling smile guaranteed!

Here, three low-abrasive toothpastes that produce dazzling results without problem-causing ingredients:

- Rembrandt Whitening Toothpaste for Canker Sore Sufferers (\$7 for 3 oz.; at [dentist.net](http://dentist.net))
- Squigle Enamel Saver Toothpaste (\$11 for 4 oz.; at [saveyoursmile.com](http://saveyoursmile.com))
- Kiss My Face AloeDyne Triple Action Toothpaste (\$5 for 3.4 oz.; at [drugstore.com](http://drugstore.com))



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