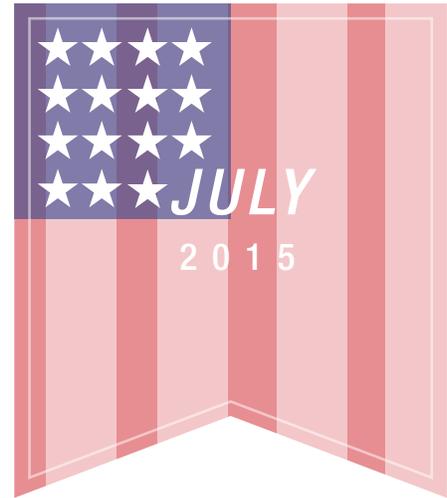


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# THE GREAT Sage

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## WHITENING YOUR SMILE

How we look and how we perceive ourselves has much to do with our self-esteem. When the color of our teeth makes us embarrassed to smile, it's probably time to get our teeth whitened [bleached].

As one ages, teeth may darken from coffee, tea, smoking, berries and other substances that get into microcracks in the enamel causing discoloration. Some people have gray or brown bands on their teeth caused by an early childhood fever or tetracycline medication taken when the tooth enamel was forming. In some parts of the country where fluoride is found in natural high concentrations in the drinking water, individuals have developed teeth with bright white patches or dark brown blotches [mottled enamel or fluorosis].

Everyone is not a candidate for bleaching. Teeth discolored from aging have the best results. If you have tooth colored resin or composite fillings in your front teeth, they will not change color from bleaching and will "stick out like a sore thumb" after the procedure. If you would like to have your teeth whitened, call it to our attention

at your next check-up visit. If you are not a good candidate, we can suggest alternatives such as bonding or porcelain veneers. There are various options to whitening your teeth. Bleaching can be an in-office procedure [chairside]. It may involve several appointments of 30-60 minutes each. The bleaching agent is applied to your teeth and activated with a special light.



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

There is also an at-home procedure wherein you will wear a custom-made mouthguard, filled with a bleaching gel, as per instructions from your dentist. Some toothpastes have added whitening agents and can be used as an adjunct to the other two procedures. In any case, there is no reason to ever again suffer the embarrassment of discolored teeth.



## Soft Drinks Not Hard to Swallow Just Too Sweet

During the past 20 years, American women increased their consumption of soft drinks by 61%, and during the same time, children and adolescents more than double theirs. Along with this, the incidence of diabetes in adults increased by 80%, and even more in children. This is understandable, since long-continued, almost daily consumption of sugar in excess causes obesity and stresses and exhausts the pancreas, the gland that produces insulin. Insufficient insulin production by the pancreas is the most common cause of diabetes. In the USA, soft drinks are now a major dietary source of sugar.

Researchers have discovered that about 71 million Americans (about a quarter of the population) are obese. A large number of these obese people will develop type-2 diabetes, with its associated high risks of atherosclerosis and premature death from heart attack and stroke. If you wish to reduce your risks of becoming obese and diabetic, take it easy with soft drinks.

Sources: *Journal of the American Medical Association* (292:927, '04) and *British Medical Journal* (329:530, '04)

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## Land That I Love

Although fireworks are fun and may be the first image that comes to mind on the Fourth of July, the real reason for this day is one that none of us should forget. Our country is beautiful, our country has great opportunity, and this country was/is full of brave people who have taken a stand to bring us this land that we love.



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