There is a secret that few people know, and it happens to be the key to maintaining a youthful appearance. During the aging process, many physical changes take hold. The skin, hair, weight and posture are affected, in addition to many other physiological changes. While some of these physical adjustments affect an individual's internal health, others plague his or her outward appearance and may cause some individuals to feel as though they've lost their luster. Most people spend their time and money attempting to smooth out wrinkles, drop five pounds, or keep their hair from going gray. Many fail to address the one feature that is consistently ranked most important in surveys regarding physical appearance: your smile.

Fact: Great Smiles Get Great Mates / Hit the Dentist's Office, Not the Gym

The British Dental Health Foundation conducted a study, which found that an attractive smile is the single most important physical attraction feature when meeting and interacting with others. When rating various facial features and the relative importance of each on a scale of 1-10, a good smile averaged 9.33. In fact, when seeking a new partner, an attractive smile is the most sought-after attribute. In several national surveys, great smiles beat out all other aspects of physical attraction, including body shape and size, personal style, and eye color. In other words, the vast majority of respondents would prefer a mate with a charming grin over someone thinner or better dressed. According to a national survey, 38 percent of Americans would consider not going on a second date with someone who has misaligned teeth, while only 23 percent would dump a date who lives with his or her parents.

Fact: Confident Smiles Win Big Opportunities

It's one thing for your smile to affect your odds of finding a date for Friday night, but did you know that it also affects your chances of getting a job or a promotion? A study conducted by the research company, Kelton, found that individuals with straight teeth are perceived to be more capable. Therefore, people with straight teeth are 45 percent more likely to get a given job or promotion than someone who has a similar skill set and experience but who happens to have crooked teeth. People with straight teeth are also perceived as 58 percent more likely to be successful and wealthy.

Fact: Updating Your Smile is Easy and Painless

Unlike other products, you can be sure that a whiter, brighter smile will definitely improve your overall appearance. Furthermore, the options for modern cosmetic dentistry are easy to understand and faster than ever when performed by a knowledgeable dental professional. For a cosmetic dental update, consider looking into whitening treatments, veneers, tooth-colored fillings, implants, clear orthodontic aligners, or dentures and bridges.