

UNDER A DIFFERENT SKY

BY IFFAT NAWAZ



The few moving minutes

IT'S been nine years since I have been riding the metro rail. I am among the fortunate/unfortunate bunch that depends still on the subway system to take us places: work, home, and all that's in the middle and beyond. The other day while I stared at my reflection in one of the big windows of an insignificant metro car, the dark walls closing-in from both sides reminded me that for a long time that I have been synchronizing my steady movements with them...and it made me think, how the metro rider's life might have changed me.

When I first started taking the under and over ground trains I was a teenager, ready for the world, I had figured it all out, trying to become bored with life fast, but still unable to hide awed eyes. I learnt the system inside and out, became an avid guesser of how long it takes a train to get from one station to the other, during rush and non-rush hours, how certain lines carry trendier crowds than others, how the suburb folks look so much more anxious to get home than the city dwellers. The club crowd, the students, the lobbyists, the doctors and the computer engineers. I learnt to tell it all, and it wasn't a talent, because like me anyone who has been riding the metro long enough can tell who is who and where is what just from one tiny glimpse.

One of the unwritten rules of the metro crowd around the DC metro area is, the rule of silence. Silent intimidation. We don't talk. We put our personalities, bubbly, talkative, average, whatever it might be, in our purses and wallets when we enter the metro zone. Everyone puts a face on that says don't look at me because I am not looking at you. There are days when I stand or sit in a metro car shoulder to shoulder with others, and there is pin drop silence, it's quite a scene actually, probably the only time when hundreds of people are cramped into constricted spaces without uttering any sound. DC metro does not welcome friendship, it only allows you to practice your game face, and we are all comfortable that way.

But strange incidents do happen from time to time in metros, to remind us we are not just bodies but also souls with minds. Like the other day when a middle aged Asian man got up with his holy book and wished everyone a good morning and then started singing a Christian holy song, all of us with our game faces tried to hide our expressions, looking at him indirectly, avoiding eye contact with each other. He sat down after two minutes, "have a blessed day" he said. And I felt relieved. The world has made us cynical, religion is no longer okay to be practiced or preached in public spaces, especially in constricted public spaces like the metro. I thought how strange it would be if an Arab man sang a holy song about Islam, how many people would have panic attacks, waiting for some bomb to go off, including me.

Perhaps it's to avoid situations of that sort, to avoid eccentrics, to avoid negative and positive topics that we leave our human minds outside the metro and carry our bodies underground. It's a secret code among the metro riders, we don't welcome your personalities, so don't show your character, just shut up and ride. And most of us are happy with that, we don't want holy singers who make us think of suicide bombers, we don't want Girls Guide cookie sellers, they make us think of middle class America, we don't want bright eyed tourists, they annoy us with their enthusiasm. We just want to shut up and ride.

So yes, the metro system has changed me, it has given me the power to observe without looking, to be silent without demanding any rights, and to appreciate movement, the basic and essential in the world of fruitless luxuries and forceful impressions.

BEAUTY TALK

SADIA MOYEEN Beautician, La Belle



Beauty Talk

Dear Sadia,

I am a 17 yr old student living in Manchester and an avid reader of your weekly tips. I have a few queries. Firstly, I have a very bad problem of hair loss. My hair falls, but it does not grow back as much. As a result the front part of my hair seems very bald. There is hair left but it looks so bad. I also have dandruff problem, but it has lessened. At the moment I am using this dandruff shampoo and conditioner from the body shop along with olive oil and Shahnaz Hussain's herbal oil recommended by an Indian beautician. What should I do? Secondly, I have dark underarms. The darkness has lessened after using a Dove anti-perspirant. But it is still quite dark. I have heard that wax-



ing underarms and using lemon helps lessen the darkness. What can be done about this? Thirdly, I use foundation on my face on a regular basis. Is it harmful? I would appreciate it a lot if you could please help.

Shalita

Hi Shalita!

Use the following hair pack twice a week followed by your usual shampoo & conditioner.

- 1 tbsp-yoghurt
- 1 tab-Vit E
- 2 tbsp-lemon juice
- 2 tbsp-beaten egg
- 1 tbsp-Shahnaz hair oil

1 tsp-onion juice

Yes, waxing is a better option for dark underarms, but bleach them before waxing. Using foundation, acts as a protective barrier for the skin and there's no harm in using it everyday. Just be sure to remove it properly every night.

Dear Sadia,

I am a housewife of 35. I have been suffering from some black spots on my face for the last 4-5 years. I have oily skin. Is there any remedy to get rid of them?

B Parveen

Dear Parveen

Apply 2% hydroquinone on the spots every night sparingly only on the spots. Use sun block everyday, or else sun exposure will darken and increase the marks.

Hi Sadia,

I am a 19 year-old girl. I have been having a lot of pimples and black-heads from my early teens, and to top it off, have a lot of marks from pimples since I scratched them. Can you please tell me how to get rid of the marks? I try to put on the neem paste you advise about, regularly. At what intervals should I use them? I also have dry curly hair. I have been using Sunsilk black for a few months and at first it turned my hair very silky and soft, but now, hair-fall has seemed to increase. What should I do? Is there any other way of preventing split-ends other than trimming? I have steps cut, so I don't think that it can be properly trimmed, and trimming it will make it too short. Thank you.

Worried

Dear Worried,

Neem will help prevent and calm acne but will not help the scarring at all.

Meet a dermatologist to see the extent of acne marks and stop damaging new pimples.

Use aloe vera gel as many times as required during the day. Twice a month fair polish will be helpful too as it will remove excess oil on the skin and clear blocked pores.

Sunsilk black is a great shampoo but give it a break for a few weeks and then go back to using it. Meanwhile try Vive by L'Oréal both shampoo & conditioner.

Trimming is the only efficient way to rid of split ends.

Deep conditioning will make them appear smoother, they may not show but will still be there.

DENTAL WISE



DR. MAHFUZUL HAQ KHAN BDS, DDS, FSDCE (USA), PhD (Japan), Post Doc. (Japan) Specialised: Crown and Bridge work, and Periodontal plastic surgery (USA) Assistant Professor and Consultant, Department of Dentistry, BIRDEM Hospital.

Dental wise

Hello Dr. Mahfuz,

I am 38 years old. The color of my teeth is brownish yellow. I really feel social embarrassment because of my teeth. One Dentist suggested to me to do an all porcelain cap, which is very expensive. Can you give me another option instead of a cap? What about bleaching? Is it possible to do it in Bangladesh? Will it work on my teeth?

Anisha

Dear Ms Anisha

Yes a porcelain cap is a permanent solution for your case though it will be very expensive. Yes another option is bleaching but it will not last more than 3 years. But many people have definite aesthetic problems from internal or external stains, whereas others worry needlessly about the overall color of their teeth. In the latter instance the dentist must decide if the color of the teeth can be improved

enough to justify the treatment even though the patient insists on having something done. For e.g., a person with a light complexion may believe that their teeth are too dark when actually they are normal in color.

Most external stains can be removed by a thorough cleaning of teeth, with an instrument called "ultrasonic scaler". This instrument removes most of the stains caused by tobacco, food debris or bacteria. Another option is bonding filling. But I need to examine you for selecting the best option.

Dr.Khan

Are pain pills and antibiotics an acceptable substitute for a root canal? My reason for asking is the experience I had four years back. On a holiday weekend (at night), I had an intense, almost unbearable toothache. In desperation, I called my family physi-

cian, and he gave me a prescription for pain killers and antibiotics. The next day, the pain was gone, and my dentist later told me, "That tooth is dying, and you need a root canal treatment". So I am wondering, if this only occurs every few years, and pain pills and antibiotics control it, will it hurt anything to treat it that way, instead of having a root canal?

Kittik Chakma

Dear Mr Chakma

Pain killers or any antibiotics can not be a substitute for a root canal treatment. This is just a temporary solution. Actually you are suffering from chronic pulpitis. If untreated it may cause abscess, cyst, granuloma etc. I strongly recommend you to start the root canal treatment right now.

For further information please visit Dr Khan's website www.aikodental.com

BY THE WAY

Get rid of odours from your refrigerator

DON'T you just hate it when your favourite dish smells like something else? After keeping them in the freezer for some time it becomes all tainted by a blend of odour. It happens when you don't clean your freezer regularly. Food with the stronger scent overtakes all the other food. It sometimes even leaves a long lasting odour. To get rid of stale odours from the refrigerator, put fresh lemon pieces inside the fridge at different places. The odour will disappear within hours.