

Whitening

Teeth Whitening is now a very popular way of improving the appearance of your teeth. It is very reasonably priced and can be very effective: it is non-invasive and non-surgical so can be very good for patients who would just like a minor change to their appearance.



Unfortunately it is not suitable for everyone; there are different factors that need to be taken into consideration before starting the treatment.

- Tooth-coloured fillings, crowns, bridges and veneers will not lighten when your teeth are bleached. So if you have a lot of these types of restorations in your mouth you may not notice any improvement. Or if you lighten the teeth they will then make the bridges, crowns and veneers seem darker.
- Teeth whitening treatment does not produce the same results on all types of teeth discolouration. Someone with yellow tinted teeth would probably have great results with bleaching, while someone with grey tinted teeth might be disappointed as they don't bleach as well.
- Tooth sensitivity and gum irritation are common side effects of teeth whitening treatments.
- People who have gum disease need treatment before getting their teeth whitened.
- It's a good idea to have thorough dental cleaning, preferably with a hygienist prior to having your teeth whitened to remove surface stains.
- If you have any cavities, they should be filled before you have your teeth whitened.
- Touch-ups are usually needed to maintain your desired shade, depending upon habits such as smoking; drinking coffee and tea and eating certain foods which will stain your teeth

There are two different approaches which the dentist may take to whitening your teeth and sometimes they may consider a combination of the two.



In surgery whitening

Teeth whitening treatment in a dental surgery offers excellent results and can be done very quickly, usually in a little over an hour. Though this bleaching is expensive, the time saved and immediate results are attractive. This type of whitening can cause increased sensitivity in some patients



Take home whitening kits

These kits are very easy to use and consist of a tray which will have been custom made to fit your teeth and some tooth whitening gel. This contains peroxide. It is usually recommended that you wear the trays overnight. However they are made from clear plastic and maybe worn for a few hours during the day instead.

There is not any added benefit from wearing trays over night because the whitening gel will lose effect after a few hours. The gel and tray system which you will receive from your dentist will differ from a kit which you buy from a shop in a couple of ways. The results you get from the shop will take longer because the peroxide gel is in a weaker concentration. The trays which you buy from a shop are not custom made like the ones your dentist will have made and this can then cause the whitening to come out of the tray and into contact with your gums, making them slightly burnt and sore.

