

## TEETH WHITENING

Whiter teeth look younger and healthier.

It costs £250 if both upper and lower teeth are whitened, but it is sensible to start with the upper teeth first as you can then see the whitening occur in comparison to the lower. Some people only need the uppers done as they don't show their lower teeth, so for only £125 they can transform their smile at a fraction of the cost and bother of veneers or crowns.

Our preferred method of whitening teeth uses special gel held against the outer visible surfaces of the teeth inside a slim easy to wear mouth guard (tray). The tray is made from thin flexible clear vinyl polymer. They are very similar to the clear plastic retainers worn after orthodontic braces come off. This is the original way teeth were whitened, and many dentists still consider it the best way as the patient has less chance of sensitivity, a longer lasting result, and the opportunity to repeat the process more cheaply once the whitening effect begins to fade.

We use Opalescence 15% Carbamide Peroxide Whitening Gel that has proven very effective for most cases. We provide 4 syringes of the gel for upper teeth and the same for the lower row of teeth if being done simultaneously. Patients are then asked to wear the trays coated with gel while they sleep for 15 consecutive nights.

Close-up photographs of the teeth before and after the treatment are taken. Natural teeth vary in shade from person to person, so dentists have shade selector guides with 20 of the shades of whiteness found in nature. We pick from this guide the shade that most closely matches the colour of your teeth and this is included in a photograph so we have a reference to compare changes in the shade of your teeth after whitening.

Occasionally, a patient will find some of their teeth can become sensitive but this is only a temporary setback and we have tips how to proceed with the whitening process should this happen. There is no evidence that the teeth are harmed by the whitening process, though patients need to follow the advice of a dentist on the frequency and concentration of gels used so that the soft tissues are protected. This is one of the main reasons, that the law makes it illegal now for anyone other than a dentist to provide these agents to patient.

Whitened teeth will eventually start to dull again due to the daily challenge of what we consume and the effects of ageing. However, for most people they can maintain the levels of whitening initially achieved by using £25 of gel every year or so, how often varies from person to person. We have found one of our main roles is curbing people's enthusiasm for boosting the whiteness of their teeth unnecessarily often. This is why we ask you to look after the trays that have been made to fit your teeth, so as you have them when needed again.

The trays are very robust to everything except being exposed to hot water as this distorts the material. Clean the trays after use with cold water, toothpaste and a toothbrush. Sometimes a cotton pellet takes

the bulk of the gel out easier than anything. If you feels the trays need freshened more, then soak them for a few hours in a dilute solution of Milton's cleaning fluid or a similar product.

Patients must also be at least 18 years old to have their teeth whitened.