



priory dental
care

Teeth Whitening Information & Consent Form

General Information

Teeth whitening is designed to lighten the colour of your teeth using a bleaching gel. Significant lightening can be achieved in the vast majority of cases, but the results cannot be guaranteed. When done properly, the whitening will not harm your teeth or gums. However, like any other treatment, it has some inherent risks and limitations. These are seldom serious enough to discourage you from having your teeth whitened, but should be considered when deciding to have the treatment.

The technique of tooth whitening is not for everybody. There are some situations where bleaching is contra-indicated, such as where the front teeth are already crowned or veneered or have very large fillings present or where the teeth are excessively worn and there is surface tooth loss. The most ideal situation is where there is not much wrong with the teeth except colour.

How long should I wear the trays for?

There is no totally reliable way to predict how light your teeth will whiten. This depends on the amount of lightening that you require and the original colour of the teeth. If the teeth are dark yellow or grey, it will take longer for the bleaching to be effective. Some particularly discoloured teeth (e.g. those affected by tetracycline) can take several months to bleach, but this is an exception. People with minimal discoloration, (teeth that are already very white) may not see a substantial degree of whitening.

Commonly, you should continue the bleaching treatments for 7 to 21 days, until you reach the desired result, however your dentist can advise you on the recommended duration. The bleaching gel should *only* be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions (please refer to the manufacturer's instruction leaflet, which will be given to you separately to this information sheet) and always follow the advice from your dentist.

What do I do if I have any sensitivity?

Sensitivity of the teeth is the most common side effect of home bleaching. This usually occurs around the necks of the teeth where the gums have receded. If you are experiencing any sensitivity, you should stop bleaching your teeth for a few days. If the teeth become very sensitive, you can place a desensitising toothpaste (e.g. Sensodyne or Colgate Sensitive Pro-Relief) in the bleaching trays for about an hour a day. This usually stops the sensitivity. Alternatively, you can rub the desensitising toothpaste into the gum margins with a finger 5 times a day for a few days. If you are at all concerned please contact the practice.

What do I do if I have any gum irritation?

Prolonged gel contact with gums or soft tissue may cause gum irritation. Potential irritation can be minimised by not allowing the bleaching gel to stay on the gums or lips. Upon placing the trays, wipe away the excess gel with absorbent material such a cotton swab or cloth. You should also try using less gel. If you are at all concerned, stop using the product immediately, and inform your dentist.

What happens if the teeth do not bleach evenly?

You may notice white spots appearing on the teeth while you are undertaking the bleaching treatment. These white spots were already present on the teeth before bleaching. As the teeth become lighter they become more visible. Do

Patient Initials _____

not worry. As the whole tooth itself becomes lighter, these spots will fade. Sometimes the dentist can carry out a special procedure called microabrasion, where the white spots can be removed.

Some teeth may appear banded with whiter/lighter areas. Again, these bandings were originally present on the tooth. When the tooth was dark these bands were not obvious but, as the tooth is bleached, the lighter parts of the tooth will lighten first followed by the darker banded area. After a week or so these will not be noticeable.

Completion of treatment

Your smile will appear brighter but very rarely, teeth will only lighten a little. If this happens and you are wearing the trays as recommended, you may need to try a different bleaching product or a slightly higher concentration of the bleaching material.

If you have white fillings in the front teeth that match the existing shade of your teeth before you bleach, they may not match the teeth afterwards. This is because your teeth can lighten but the fillings do not. When the desired colour has been achieved the fillings can be replaced with a lighter shade of material to match the new shade of your teeth. Normally we would wait a few weeks before changing the fillings.

How long does the bleaching last? Will I have to bleach my teeth again?

Normally the new whiter colour of your teeth keeps quite well, however some patients may find they need to do a top up treatment after a few months or a few years. The effect is dependent upon what has caused the teeth to discolour in the first place. If you drink lots of coffee, red wine, cola drinks or smoke, the effect may darken slightly. Bleaching will be particularly affected by smoking. Smoking causes the teeth to darken anyway and the effects will be diminished. So try to reduce smoking during and after bleaching.

Does bleaching harm the teeth?

Safety studies have shown that bleaching teeth, using a dentist prescribed home teeth whitening technique, is perfectly safe on teeth, gums and tissues of the mouth. Bleaching the teeth with these kits is equivalent to drinking one fizzy drink. The bleaching material has a neutral pH and hence does not dissolve or degrade tooth substance in any way.

Your responsibilities

Home teeth whitening will only be effective if you conscientiously wear the bleaching tray for the prescribed amount of time. If you experience any severe discomfort or other problems, discontinue the whitening and contact us immediately. Any discomfort is usually temporary and disappears after a few days.

Informed Consent: The nature and purpose of teeth whitening has been explained to me, and I have had an opportunity to have my questions answered. I understand that dentistry is not an exact science and success with treatment cannot be 100% guaranteed. In view of the above information I am giving my consent to Dr Martin Hako and/or associates, as necessary, to render any treatment necessary and/or advisable to my dental condition. I will follow all treatment and post-treatment instructions as explained and directed to me.

Patient Signature: _____ Date: _____

Patient Name: