

## Teeth whitening: a guide to a brighter smile!



A bright white smile can make you feel confident and beautiful. Teeth whitening is a common cosmetic dental procedure that can help you achieve a brighter smile by removing stains and discoloration from your teeth. This patient information booklet will explain what teeth whitening is, how it works, and what you can expect during and after the procedure.

### **What is teeth whitening?**

Teeth whitening is a cosmetic dental procedure that involves removing stains and discoloration from your teeth to make them look brighter and whiter. This is usually achieved through the use of bleaching agents, which penetrate the enamel of your teeth and remove stains.

There are two main types of teeth whitening: whitening in the clinic and whitening at home. Whitening is done in the clinic in the dentist's office, while whitening is done at home using dedicated trays and whitening gel.



## How does teeth whitening work?

Teeth whitening works with whitening agents to remove stains and discoloration from your teeth. The most commonly used whitening agent is **hydrogen peroxide**, which breaks down molecules that cause stains and discoloration on your teeth.

Teeth whitening in the clinic usually involves applying a highly concentrated hydrogen peroxide gel to your teeth and using a special light to activate the gel. The procedure usually takes about an hour and can lead to teeth up to eight degrees whiter.



Teeth whitening at home usually involves the use of specially equipped trays filled with low-concentration hydrogen peroxide gel. Trays are worn for a set amount of time each day, usually for a week or two, until they reach the desired level of whiteness.



## **What can you expect during a teeth whitening procedure?**

If you choose to have teeth whitening done in the clinic, you can expect to spend about an hour in the dentist's office. The first step is to prepare your teeth by brushing them and removing any plaque or tartar. The dentist will then apply a protective gel to your gums to protect them from bleaching.

Next, the dentist will apply hydrogen peroxide gel to your teeth and use a special light to activate the gel. You may feel some sensitivity or discomfort during the procedure, but this is normal and should go away after the procedure is over.

If you choose to perform teeth whitening at home, your dentist will first make custom trays that fit your teeth perfectly. You will be given a low concentration hydrogen peroxide gel to use with trays. You will wear trays for a set amount of time each day, usually for a week or two, until they reach the desired level of whiteness.

## **What are the risks and side effects of teeth whitening?**

Teeth whitening is generally safe, but there are some risks and side effects that you should be aware of. The most common side effect is tooth sensitivity, which can occur during and after the procedure. This allergy usually disappears within a few days.

Other side effects include gum irritation and white spots on the teeth. These side effects are rare and usually disappear on their own.

If you suffer from gum disease or tooth decay, you should not undergo teeth whitening until these issues are addressed. Teeth whitening can also cause discoloration of existing dental work, such as fillings or crowns. Your dentist can help you determine if teeth whitening is right for you based on your dental health and history.

### **How can you maintain your bright white smile?**



To maintain your bright white smile after teeth whitening, it is important to practice good oral hygiene. This includes brushing your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, and flossing daily. If you have any concerns about whitening or your dental care routine, always ask your dentist.