

Bleaching

What is Bleaching

Tooth whitening, or tooth bleaching, is the process of lightening the color of your teeth. Whitening is often desirable when teeth become stained over time for a number of reasons, and can be achieved by changing the intrinsic or extrinsic color of the tooth enamel.

Side Effects of Bleaching

The two side effects that occur most often with teeth whitening are a temporary increase in tooth sensitivity and mild irritation of the soft tissues of the mouth, particularly the gums. Tooth sensitivity often occurs during early stages of the bleaching treatment. Using a sensitivity toothpaste (such as Sensodyne) before, during and after treatment may help with tooth sensitivity.

Considerations

Tooth Whitening (bleaching) gel will only whiten natural teeth. It will NOT bleach (whiten) nor harm bonding, caps, crowns, bridges, fillings, or any other artificial dental work. You may have to have the dentistry redone to match your new lighter shade once bleaching is complete. Tetracycline (an antibiotic) stained teeth or grayish teeth are more difficult to bleach and have a varied prognosis. The exposed root portion of teeth, which occurs with gum recession, will also not bleach. If you have amalgam (silver) fillings in, near or behind the front teeth, long term bleaching can cause the surrounding tooth to have a greenish tint. Bleaching teeth that are see-through can cause the teeth to become even more translucent and may give the tooth a darker appearance. It is essential to consult a dentist if you have any of the above concerns.

Bleaching Instructions:

1. Dry teeth with a dry cloth, load tray with bleaching gel, and place over teeth

If excessive bleaching gel squeezes out from the tray, you are using too much

2. Rinse mouth with water to remove excess gel from mouth (do not swallow the bleaching gel)

Daytime Use: Wear 30 mins twice a day. Allow minimum 1 hr between each wear time

Nighttime Use: Wear 8-10 hrs. Allow minimum 24 hrs between each nighttime wear

3. After use, rinse teeth with warm water, rinse bleaching tray, and wait 30 mins before brushing, eating or drinking (avoid dark liquids such as coffee and tea)

Excessive or prolonged use will cause increased sensitivity. Adjust schedule accordingly

Most people achieve maximum results in 2-3 weeks; do not use continuously for more than 21 days

*Do not swallow bleach or allow contact with eyes

*If redness, swelling or soreness of the gums is persistent, discontinue use

*Do not allow children to use or come in contact with bleach

*Do not use bleach while pregnant or breastfeeding

*Store in a cool, dry place, and do not freeze or expose bleach to heat/sunlight

*Do not use tobacco products or eat while wearing bleaching trays