



# Tooth Whitening

## A smile that says it all!

Tooth whitening is a cosmetic procedure for lightening the colour of the teeth. At Tewkesbury Dental Practice, we can offer you two type of treatments; either a personal home treatment or a power whitening at the practice.

### **What causes teeth to discolour?**

Teeth yellow naturally and discolour over the years, but staining is made worse by such things as smoking, drinking tea, coffee and red wine. Teeth whitening gently removes stains leaving your teeth cleaner and brighter.

### **Who can benefit from whitening?**

Most people will benefit from tooth whitening. Existing fillings, crowns and veneers will not be lightened; however old restoration can be replaced if they look too dark after treatment is completed.

Discolouration on some teeth may not respond and some may take longer or be more difficult to treat than others. When you have your first consultation appointment, your dentist will advise on the most suitable techniques for your teeth, the timescale and the expected results.

Tooth whitening is not recommended if you are pregnant, breast feeding or allergic to plastic or peroxide.

*Give yourself a brighter smile*

### **What is involved in the whitening process?**

There are two main techniques which can be used separately or in combination, depending on individual requirements and preferences. The most popular technique is home whitening using a 10% or 15% concentration gel and uses custom-made trays that fit your teeth exactly. You will need to wear the tray for

30 minutes a day for two weeks.

Another technique is power-whitening; this involves a stronger gel which is applied to your teeth in the treatment room. Power whitening can give you a dramatic improvement in tooth colour at the first visit although some patients may need a follow up treatment.

It is possible to combine the two techniques by using power whitening as an initial procedure followed by home treatment to maintain the effects (at a time and place that suit you).

### **How long does it take?**

The length of treatment will depend on the colour of your teeth and the results you want to achieve. For instance, mild yellowing will usually respond to home treatment applied over the course of two weeks, but severe staining may take longer.

You will need three 30 minutes appointments for the home procedure as impressions of your teeth will be taken in order to make the custom-fit tray. Power whitening takes one visit lasting approximately one hour.

You will need to discuss your requirements and expectations with our dentist. If you are not a current patient of this practice the dentist will need to assess your dental health to decide whether the treatment would be suitable for you.

### **Are there any side effects?**

Sensitivity during the treatment or for a few days after is the most

commonly reported side effect. The sensitivity usually disappears of its own accord, soon after the treatment has been completed and can be ease by using a sensitive toothpaste or a fluoride mouthwash.

### **How long does the whitening last?**

In some cases there is an immediate whitening effect that does not last. With power whitening this is due to the dehydration effect of the treatment. Once these initial effects have settled and the true colour has been achieved, the effect can last from 1 to 3 years or longer.

How long the whitening lasts will depend on the initial cause of your tooth discolouration and on your diet and individual circumstances. Whitening can be topped up as desired.

