

Teeth whitening is a highly effective way of lightening the natural colour of your teeth without removing any of the tooth surface.

Why whiten my teeth?

White teeth look great- attractive, youthful and clean. Few people have naturally white teeth, and teeth can become darker with age. Smoking and drinks such as tea, coffee and red wine will also progressively darken the teeth.

What does teeth whitening involve?

Teeth whitening is a bleaching process that lightens discoloration and removes stains from within the enamel of the teeth. During your consultation the procedure will be discussed with you to determine if teeth whitening is suitable in your case. Teeth whitening does not affect the colour of artificial teeth, crowns, veneers or fillings.

What different methods of whitening are available?

Home whitening:

A mould of your teeth is taken which is used to make thin, clear trays, which fit snugly over your teeth. You will be given syringes of gel that contain a carbamide peroxide bleaching agent. You will need to place some of the gel in the tray and wear it over your teeth for a few hours daily for one to three weeks. You need to wear the tray for at least three hours each day- or overnight if you prefer. We will see you again to review progress after two weeks and will monitor progress with photographs.

In surgery whitening:

“Zoom”, “power whitening” and “laser whitening” are all techniques that are completed at a single visit in the surgery. They use extra strong gels kept on the teeth for the duration of the appointment and are often activated using bright lights. Although it is a more expensive technique, if in-surgery whitening is used and then followed up with home whitening it can give outstanding results.

Internal tooth-whitening:

If an individual tooth is discoloured, and has been root-treated in the past, we can often achieve excellent results by bleaching it internally. This technique is usually combined with home whitening for best results.

Is the process safe?

Yes. Research and clinical studies indicate that whitening teeth with carbamide peroxide and/or hydrogen peroxide, under the supervision of a dentist, is safe for teeth and gums.

How much does it cost?

Teeth whitening at Temple Street Dental Practice starts at £299. You will need a consultation with the dentist to discuss the most suitable method for your teeth and the result you wish to achieve.

Is teeth whitening OK for everyone?

Teeth whitening can only lighten the existing colour of your natural teeth. It will not work on any types of ‘false’ teeth such as crowns, veneers or dentures. These may need replacing if they are stained or are the wrong colour. If you have white fillings, these will not change and may also need to be replaced to match your whitened teeth.



The teeth of our Patient Treatment Co-ordinator, George, after whitening

How long will my teeth stay whiter?

The effects of whitening normally last for many years, although this will vary from person to person. Inevitably with time the teeth will start to darken again due to drinks and food (and more rapidly if you are a smoker). Most people like to maintain their whitening effect by using the gel for one or two nights every three to six months. Additional syringes of gel can be purchased from the practice.

What if I am pregnant?

To date, there has been no testing done on the effects of teeth whitening while pregnant or breast-feeding. To be cautious we recommend that you do not have your teeth whitened during pregnancy.

Are there any side effects?

Most people find that their teeth become sensitive to cold during the treatment. This lessens after a few days, but you may find you need to have a break from whitening for a day or so or use a toothpaste such as “Sensodyne” to reduce the effect. If you have natural white flecks in your enamel these will become more apparent during treatment but will fade following treatment.

What about whitening toothpastes?

Whitening toothpastes do not affect the natural colour of your teeth. They may be effective at removing staining and may help maintain the effect of professional whitening.

What about home kits?

Home kits are cheap, but are usually not very effective. Over-the-counter kits sold in the UK are not recommended as they contain only a very small concentration of peroxide (the whitening agent). To be effective gels need to have at least 3.6%. Many home kits contain mild acids and/or abrasives. Acid or abrasives used on the teeth will ultimately make the teeth even yellower with time by damaging the enamel of your teeth.

Teeth whitening is not available as an NHS treatment