

Teeth Whitening – the Pros and Cons

At Maple Dental Office we offer both supervised in-office teeth whitening as well as whitening trays that you can use in the comfort of your own home. While personal makeover programs may have helped bring whitening and other cosmetic procedure to the public's attention, the positive results of whitening speak for themselves.

The Cons of Whitening

The negatives associated with whitening are generally short term. The results of teeth whitening are noticeable after a single visit and will be noticed by those around you. This may be a disadvantage if you are self-conscious. Some patients experience heightened tooth sensitivity and irritation or soreness in their gums during the whitening process. These effects dissipate shortly after the whitening process has been completed. We can test for sensitivity prior to beginning a whitening treatment.

The Pros of Whitening

Whitening is safe and effective! The long term results of increased confidence and health benefits of smiling more often far outweigh any short term discomfort. The results of whitening last for a long period and can be maintained through take-home touch ups. The bright white look of your teeth will convey a cleaner, healthier and youthful appearance. The effect has been shown to increase confidence and allow you to smile more often. White teeth create a positive focal point for others as you speak, leading to an increase in your confidence.

Tooth Whitening Q & A

Q: Are results guaranteed? Does it work for everyone?

A: It is not possible to guarantee results, due to differences in oral hygiene care and habits such as smoking and drinking dark coloured liquids. There are a small percentage of patients whose teeth will not respond to bleaching.

Q: How long will it last?

A: Whitening usually lasts for several years after which time a touch-up treatment may be required. We will monitor any shade changes at your regular appointments.

Q: Will my teeth whiten evenly?

A: Some people have varied areas of calcification on their teeth that may become evident as white spots while bleaching. These usually blend with the rest of the tooth as the treatments progress or afterward during the rehydration period.

Q: How will whitening affect my white fillings and porcelain crowns?

A: It is important to note that chemical bleaching does not work on porcelain crowns, composite (white) fillings, bonding or veneers. Approximately two weeks after the completion of treatments, the shade will be stable and the teeth ready for the replacement of any fillings that no longer match the new tooth shade.

Q: Will it make my teeth sensitive?

A: Some people may experience temporary tooth sensitivity as a result of using bleaching treatments. This usually disappears when treatments are stopped or a desensitizing gel is used in the bleaching tray.

Q: What is in the bleaching gel and is it safe for everyone?

A: The active ingredient in the gel is carbamide peroxide in a glycerin base. If you are aware of any allergy or adverse reaction to these ingredients, do not proceed with treatment. Pregnant or lactating women should not use whitening treatments. We use a product that has been proven safe when used under the direction of a dentist. Our office uses an advanced procedure that is not available over the counter.

Q: What is the whitening process?

A: We are proud to offer one of our most popular whitening treatment methods in one appointment in our office. The results are immediate and monitored closely during the process.

Custom trays are also given by taking impressions of your teeth creating custom whitening trays. These trays are given to you to take home and will guide the whitening agent to the areas of your teeth that need to be touched up for any future use.

We will record the current colour of your teeth to help you monitor your progress. We also offer another method of whitening. Impressions of your teeth are taken. A custom tray is created and given with instructions to monitor at home. We will instruct you on how to apply the whitening agent to your trays and how to insert them into your mouth. These trays and the whitening agent can then be taken home with you. The trays can be worn while you sleep or during the day. The clear, custom-fitted trays are barely visible and do not interfere with your ability to speak.

Q: When will I see results?

A: This depends on the original colour of your teeth, how discoloured they were, and how frequently the treatment is applied.

Q: How long will the results last?

A: The effects typically last several years. Many patients choose to touch up their teeth every 6 to 12 months by applying the treatment for 1 or 2 nights. Touch ups are especially useful for patients that drink beverages that stain teeth, like coffee and tea.

Q: Are there any side effects?

A: Some patients may experience heightened tooth sensitivity or mild tooth or gum sensitivity during treatment, but these symptoms are only temporary and disappear within a few days after the treatment is finished.