

TOOTH WHITENING

To discuss having your teeth whitened give our reception team a call on 01889 582 080 or alternatively please use our online booking service any day any time to book an appointment online with one of our dentists.

More and more people are paying for brighter, whiter teeth. But does teeth whitening work and is it safe? Here are the answers to common questions about the treatment.

What is teeth whitening?

Teeth whitening involves bleaching your teeth to make them lighter. Teeth whitening can't make your teeth brilliant white, but it can lighten the existing colour by several shades.

Who can perform teeth whitening?

Teeth whitening is a form of dentistry and should only be performed by a dentist or another regulated dental professional, such as a dental hygienist or dental therapist, on the prescription of a dentist.

Some beauty salons offer teeth whitening, but this is illegal if there's no dental professional present, and it may put your oral health at risk.

You can also buy DIY home teeth whitening kits but these may also carry risks.

What happens during teeth whitening at the dentist?

If you have teeth whitening you will need to make several visits to the dental surgery over a couple of months.

The dentist will take an impression of your teeth to make a mouth guard and will instruct you how to use it with a bleaching gel. Then, using your mouth guard at home, you regularly apply the gel for a specified period of time over two weeks. Some whitening gels can be left on for up to eight hours at a time, which shortens the treatment period to just over one week.

Another type of teeth whitening system that a dentist can provide is called laser / light whitening, which is also known as power whitening. This is where a bleaching product is painted onto your teeth and then a light or laser may be shone on them to activate the whitening. Power whitening takes about an hour and the end result may be stabilized with an at home kit. Your dentist will advise you on this.

Can any dentist whiten teeth?

Yes, all of our dentists are registered with the GDC and able to carry out tooth whitening.

What about home kits and beauty salons for teeth whitening?

We would only advise you to go to a registered dental professional for teeth whitening because whitening by people who aren't qualified, for example in beauty salons, may be illegal. Home kits also carry risks.

What are the risks of home kits and salon teeth whitening?

We would recommend all patients be examined by one of our dentists before having any form of whitening to discuss your suitability and what treatment will be best for you. Some home kits don't contain enough of the whitening product to be effective. More generally, if a dental professional is not doing the whitening, the mouth guard provided may not fit properly so some of the bleaching gel may leak out onto your gums and into your mouth, causing blistering and sensitivity.

Where teeth whitening is carried out in beauty salons by staff without any training or dental qualifications it not only carries a risk to your oral health, but is also illegal.

Can you have your teeth whitened on the NHS?

Generally teeth whitening by a dentist or other dental professional can only be done privately because it's considered to be a cosmetic treatment. Costs vary and, as a general rule, in surgery whitening is more expensive than professional home bleaching. Speak to one of our dentists who will be able to offer advice and give you our price.

How do you go about getting teeth whitening?

Give us a call on 01889 582 080, or use our online booking service to make your appointment. Your dentist will advise you whether whitening is right for you. It may be that teeth whitening isn't suitable, for example if you have gum disease or crowns.

Is teeth whitening permanent?

No, teeth whitening isn't permanent. It can last from a few months to up to three years, but this varies from person to person. Generally, the whitening effect won't last as long if you smoke or drink red wine, tea or coffee, which can all stain your teeth.

Will teeth whitening work on false teeth?

No. Teeth whitening won't work on dentures, crowns, fillings or veneers.

What are the risks of teeth whitening?

No matter what treatment you use, there is a chance your gums can be sensitive to the chemicals used in teeth whitening, especially if you already have sensitive teeth. There's also a chance of burns to gums and some of the whitening kits used at home can harm tooth enamel.

What if I'm not happy with the results?

Your treating dentist is on hand and will be happy to review and address any concerns that you have.

To book an appointment at Avondale house Dental Surgery as either an existing or new patient please give our reception team a call on **01889 582 080** or visit our website to book your appointment online.