



## **WHAT TO EXPECT DURING YOUR TOOTH WHITENING TREATMENT 16% CARBAMIDE PEROXIDE**

Your dentist has given you a tooth whitening kit to take home with your whitening trays. It is essential that you follow the instructions given by your dentist in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations in wearing the trays and applying the whitening agent.

### ***How long should I wear the trays for?***

This depends on the amount of lightening that you desire and the original shade of the teeth. Most teeth can lighten after 2 weeks, however if your teeth are quite dark or very yellow/grey/tetracycline stained, it will take longer to whiten them. The trays should be worn for at least 6 hours but better overnight.

### ***What do I do if I have sensitivity?***

Sensitivity of teeth is the most common side effect of home whitening. This usually occurs around the neck of the teeth where the gums have receded. If you experience any sensitivity you should stop whitening for a few days, and then resume treatment. If your teeth become ultra-sensitive you can place desensitising gel into the trays for an hour a day, which will usually resolve this problem. Alternatively you can rub this toothpaste into the gum margin with your finger around 5 times a day for a few days.

If you are concerned please contact your dentist.

### ***What happens if the teeth don't whiten evenly?***

If the teeth have white spots on them before whitening, these spots will appear whiter during the first few days, however the contrast between the spots and the rest of the tooth will lessen and eventually they will not be noticed. You may notice these white spots immediately after a whitening session.

Some teeth may appear banded with lighter/darker areas. Again this banding was originally present on the tooth. As the tooth becomes lighter, the lighter parts will lighten first followed by the darker banded area. After a week or so these will no longer be noticeable.

### ***Does whitening harm the teeth or gums?***

Safety studies have shown that whitening teeth using the dentist prescribed home whitening techniques is perfectly safe on teeth, gums and tissues of the mouth.

It is important that tooth whitening is carried out under dental supervision. Home whitening kits that can be purchased over the counter can cause harm. Although they are inexpensive, they normally contain acid which can damage the teeth and thin down the enamel.

It is not advisable to whiten teeth if you smoke. It is best to stop smoking prior to commencing the procedure. Smoking causes your teeth to darken and the effects will be diminished.

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

Normally the new colour of your teeth keeps for quite a while. The effect is dependent on what has caused the teeth to discolour in the first place. If you drink lots of coffee, red wine, cola drinks then the effects may darken more quickly. Some patients do a top up treatment after 2-3 years, others do not need to.

### ***Is it for everyone?***

The whitening technique is not for everyone. There are some situations where whitening the teeth is not recommended such as where front teeth are already crowned or there are exceptionally large fillings in them or where the teeth are already excessively worn and there is tooth surface loss.

The most ideal situation is where there is not much wrong with your teeth except for the colour which has become yellow with age.

### ***What about my smile?***

If you have white fillings in your front teeth that match the existing shade of your teeth before treatment, they may not match the teeth afterwards. This is because the technique lightens the teeth but cannot lighten fillings. When the desired colour has been reached your dentist can replace these fillings with a lighter shade of filling materials to match the new shade of teeth.

It is very rare, but sometimes the teeth do not lighten at all. If this happens and you have been wearing the trays as recommend, you may need to try a different whitening product.

***IF YOU WISH TO TOP-UP YOUR WHITENING IN THE FUTURE IT IS PRUDENT TO RETAIN THE TRAYS AS THEY MAY BE ABLE TO BE USED AT THAT STAGE WHICH WILL KEEP THE COST DOWN FOR YOU.***

***If trays aren't fitting correctly at time of appointment patients will require a new course of whitening treatment with new trays at the whitening price of £250.00***