

# Professional Teeth Whitening OPTIONS

*Having your teeth whitened by a professional can make a significant difference in the way your smile looks.*

Of all the cosmetic treatments offered by dentists, teeth whitening is the most popular because it can make a dramatic difference in a person's appearance and self confidence. Professional teeth whitening can be performed in the Dental Centre by the dentist or at home under your dentist's supervision.

## Teeth Whitening Done by a Dentist

**How it works:** A whitening product is applied directly to the teeth. The product contains hydrogen peroxide (bleach) in concentrations of 15-35%. Light or heat may be used to accelerate the whitening.

• **The verdict:** Fast results. One session lasting about 60 to 90 minutes can give excellent whitening results. Many people only need one visit, but some people may need two or three to achieve the colour they want. Because the bleach is applied directly to the teeth, teeth whitening performed in a Dental Centre gives the most uniform results. Very few people experience temporary tooth sensitivity and gum irritation.

## Home Teeth Whitening Supervised by a Dentist

**How it works:** Your dentist takes impressions of your mouth and makes a customised mouthpiece for you to wear. You will be given a tooth whitening gel containing a lower concentration of hydrogen peroxide than what is used for whitening at the Dental Centre. At home, you will fill the mouthpiece with the whitening gel and wear it for a few hours each day or night. The customised mouthpiece allows maximum contact between your teeth and the whitening gel.

• **The verdict:** Slower results. The average patient must wear the mouthpiece for one to two weeks before whitening becomes visible. Some patients choose to wear the mouthpiece for several months, depending on the degree of staining on their teeth and the desired level of whitening. This form of professional whitening may require more visits to the dentist to check that the mouthpiece fits properly. Ill-fitting mouthpieces can allow the solution to leak out, causing irritation and uneven or unsatisfactory whitening. However, this method is more cost-friendly and convenient as you can do it at home.



## How White Can You Go With Teeth Whitening?

Professional teeth whitening (either performed or supervised by a dentist) can make your teeth up to seven shades lighter. Your dentist may show you cards with various shades of lightness to give you an idea of the amount of whiteness to expect.

However, the degree of whiteness achieved can vary considerably from person to person depending on the condition of your teeth, the nature of any stains, and genetics.



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## TAKE NOTE:



Some people may experience mild tooth sensitivity or gum irritation.



People with gum disease or cavities should not undergo teeth whitening because whitening solution can penetrate into tooth decay or diseased gums.



Teeth may be a little more sensitive to cold. It usually goes away by using prescription gel.



Teeth whitening is not permanent and this process has to be repeated regularly.



Pregnant and nursing women are to avoid teeth whitening because the effects of whitening agents on foetuses and babies are unknown.



Avoid smoking and other staining agents such as coffee, tea, and red wine.

