

# Tooth Whitening for a beautiful smile

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## How does tooth whitening work?

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Whitening works by lightening the middle layer, also known as dentine, of your teeth.

The hard outer coating of our teeth has small pores in it similar to our nose and the peroxide bleaching gels (usually carbamide peroxide or hydrogen peroxide) release oxygen into the tooth structure, open these pores and draws the staining out from the layer underneath.

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## Why does the tooth whitening result vary for different people?

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If your teeth can absorb the oxygen well, the dark-coloured long-chain stain molecules are broken into short molecules. Teeth vary in how well they absorb the oxygen, which causes teeth whitening results to vary person-to-person. Stronger gels produce more oxygen which is why *many people experience a different result with dental whitening as opposed to whitening solutions that have been purchased 'over-the-counter.'*

Tooth stains that are caused by food and drink are organic and usually respond well to the whitening action of oxygen.

Our dental staff will be able to give you a better idea of the potential results and also discuss your individual situation with you.

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## Take-Home dental whitening

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We begin by making a custom mouthpiece or "tray" to fit your teeth.

Different concentrations of bleach are then worn via the tray from as little as half an hour a day for an average of 10 to 14 days.

The treatment is determined by our dental team and may differ for each patient.

### **How long will my teeth stay white?**

Red wine, tea and coffee, and darker coloured foods (eg berries) are all examples of things which will affect your whitened smile. Smoking and age are also large contributing factors.

We usually advise our patients that the result will last for 1 – 2 years, however we recommended that you touch up your smile every 6 – 12 months to prolong your white smile.

Since teeth whitening only works on natural tooth enamel, it is important to consider replacing your old fillings, crowns, etc. after the bleaching is done. We can then match the new restorations to the shade of the newly whitened teeth.

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## Is tooth whitening safe?

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Research indicates that tooth whitening shows no changes to the surface of the teeth when bleaching solution is used. Therefore, there is no damage to the tooth whatsoever.

Visit our [tooth whitening webpage](#) for more information or call us on **3856 2144** to make an appointment to discuss your suitability.

