

## **TOOTH WHITENING**

### **IS IT SAFE?**

Hydrogen peroxide is the oxygenating agent that whitens the dark stains teeth. Hydrogen peroxide has been used for years as a wound cleansing agent and the experience of tens of thousands of patients has shown that it does not pose any threat to the patient or teeth when used according to directions.

### **HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?**

Studies show very little color relapse after four years. It is self-evident that certain habits such as smoking and drinking coffee or tea may cause the teeth to discolor more rapidly. Even if re-staining occurs 3-4 years down the road, it is a simple matter to retreat the teeth for a few days.

### **HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?**

It takes two to four weeks of using the tray for 30 minutes twice a day. Longer wear periods get faster results. Some people whiten their teeth while commuting to work, others do it while they are getting ready in the morning or while relaxing in the evening with a book or TV.

### **WHAT ARE SOME OF THE POTENTIAL SIDE AFFECTS?**

The side effects that can occur are minimal and go away 2 to 3 days after bleaching .

1. Sensitivity to cold or sore gums

2. The whitening process causes temporary dehydration of the teeth. This may appear as white spots or striations on the teeth.

### WHAT ARE THE STEPS INVOLVED?

The color of the teeth is recorded and photographed. Any old stained fillings will be noted and may need to be replaced after the bleaching, since fillings do not bleach and may detract from the final result. Impressions of the teeth are taken and thin clear custom trays are made. Usually we check on the progress in a week or two to check on your results.

### HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

The fee is \$275 for the upper and lower custom trays and bleach kit. We give a money-back guarantee if for any reason you are not satisfied.

### HOW DOES IT COMPARE?

Crest Whitening Strips are less expensive (\$50 - \$60) and can do the job. The weaker peroxide solution takes longer to whiten and the strips only cover the 6 front teeth. They also do not work well on crooked teeth and fall off easily. Laser bleaching is faster but more expensive (\$500 - \$600). The very strong peroxide solution can make teeth very sensitive for a while and the custom trays are usually recommended to get the maximum result and for touch-ups. We believe the custom tray method is a good combination of moderate cost, low sensitivity and fast results.