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Comprehensive Dental Care

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Bleaching

Instructions:

Before bleaching: brush and floss your teeth.

Apply a small amount of bleach in the tray to the lip side of each tooth to be bleached. A little more than a “BB” should work well.

Wipe of any excess that extrudes onto the gums when seating the tray in the mouth. If your gums are getting sore during bleaching, you are likely using too much bleach.

Wear the tray for approximately 2 hours a day. It is okay to wear the tray while you sleep. You may get quicker results by wearing the tray at night: the longer the bleach is in contact with the teeth, the quicker and more profound the bleaching will be. If you are in a hurry, it is okay to bleach two times a day for 2 hours at a time.

When done bleaching for the day, wipe residual bleach from the trays. Running the tray under warm (not hot water) and using your finger or a tooth brush works well to clean the tray. Store the tray in its plastic case not back on the stone model. The stone model will grow mold if it stays wet.

Store bleach tubes in a cool, dark place (i.e. a paper bag in the fridge). Bleach breaks down in direct light and heat.

Possible Side effects:

Sensitivity:

Teeth being sensitive to cold for a short period possibly days after bleaching is normal.

Fluoride paste or a newer desensitizing paste called MI Paste can be prescribed by the doctor.

Often times we will deliver the MI Paste at the beginning of bleaching. You will be billed for this but if you do not need to use this desensitizing treatment, please return the unopened box for a full credit to your account.

White spots:

Occasionally, teeth will have decalcified, white areas on them prior to bleaching. In most cases the look of these areas improves but in some cases these areas may become more noticeable. If at anytime you feel the white areas are becoming too prominent, stop bleaching. The other alternative is to continue bleaching and then contour the “spots” out and place a conservative, white filling material after bleaching.

Over bleaching:

Compulsively bleaching your teeth may make your enamel more translucent. This often gives the teeth a bluish halo on the incisal edges. Also, extremely white teeth are hard to color match with our current restorative materials and may not look natural. Bottom line: don't be a compulsive bleacher. Bleach your teeth initially for the time period the doctor recommends, then "touch up" the bleaching only every 12-18 months.

Common Questions:

Why can't I bleach both upper and lower teeth at the same time?

If patients bleach both arches at the same time, often they do not see a noticeable difference with bleaching. We have found that patients have greater satisfaction when they can see the process working. Also, if a patient feels that they are not getting enough color change with the upper bleaching, they can elect not to pay the fee to bleach the lower teeth.

How often do I need to "touch up" my bleach?

Generally, every 12-24 months. More bleaching solution can be dispensed at your request. Usually, a single tube of bleach will do the job. Currently, additional bleach is \$10 /tube. Remember to bring your bleach trays in if you want to continue your bleaching treatment so we can check their fit.

What concentration of bleach should I use?

We use 16% and 22% concentrations for our bleaching procedures. 22% is not better than 16%. 22% may work a little faster but the key to bleaching is the length of time the tray is in the mouth. Also, patients usually have less sensitivity with lower concentrations of bleach.

What about Laser Bleaching or Office Bleaching?

These are marketing gimmicks. They do not improve the final result and may result in greater sensitivity post bleaching. Also, as with any dental procedure the fee for the procedure needs to be higher the longer you are in the chair.

How old does a patient need to be?

Once the roots have fully formed on the second molars around the age of 14-16years old, bleaching can be performed. Remember, the pulp (nerve) is bigger on younger teeth and therefore teenagers may have significant discomfort with bleaching.