

# Tooth Whitening



Over time, your teeth can become stained and “yellow” from both your diet and environmental factors such as smoking. There are many different methods used to help whiten your teeth, and as you will find, some work much better than others. Tooth whitening refers to anything that can reduce the staining in your teeth and generally relies on some form of “bleaching” product such as hydrogen peroxide. The strength of the product and the way in which it is activated (with heat or light) plays a big part in determining how successful the result is. Your diet and the ongoing care and maintenance of your teeth will determine how long the results last for.

## How does tooth whitening work?

At Anzac Avenue dental we use the Zoom! Whitening process which involves placing a gel onto your teeth and activating it using UV light. The gel contains hydrogen peroxide and removes surface stains and discolorations from your teeth. The UV light activates the gel and significantly speeds up the process. Zoom! Is available for use as an in surgery treatment, or as a take home kit.

## Does it work for everybody?

No it doesn't and we need to assess your suitability before we can recommend the procedure. Zoom can be used in most cases to whiten natural tooth structure, but it is unsuitable in the following circumstances:

- Zoom! whitening treatments are not intended to lighten artificial teeth, caps, crowns, veneers, porcelain, composite filling material or other restorative materials.
- People with darkly stained yellow or yellow-brown teeth frequently achieve better results than people with grey or bluish-grey teeth.
- Teeth with multiple colourations, bands, splotches or spots due to tetracycline use or fluorosis do not whiten as well, may need multiple treatments or may not whiten at all.
- Teeth with many fillings, cavities, chips or cracks may not lighten and are usually best treated with other non-whitening alternatives.
- Zoom! treatment is not recommended for pregnant or lactating women, light sensitive individuals, patients receiving PUVA (Psoralen + UVA radiation) or other photo chemotherapeutic drugs or treatment, as well as patients with melanoma, diabetes or heart conditions.

The Zoom! Lamp emits ultraviolet radiation (UVA and UVB) so patients taking any drugs that increase photosensitivity should consult with their physician before undergoing Zoom! treatment.

## Possible Side Effects:

- Some patients have reported that teeth become sensitive to cold and biting pressure for a short time during and after treatments. The discomfort normally does not last for an extended time. If, however, your teeth continue to be sensitive, stop using the whitening gel and call us. Regular use of tooth mousse can help reduce sensitivity.
- Your gingiva or gums may react to the home whitening gel by creating gum sensitivity. If it does, simply decrease the amount of whitening gel in the tray, or return to the practice so we can trim the tray in order to reduce the amount of whitening gel in contact with your gum tissue.
- If home whitening trays are worn for too long, discomfort in your jaw joints may occur. This discomfort will go away when the whitening trays are removed.

**Maximizing your results:**

- Before you start your Zoom! Whitening, you must have clean, healthy teeth and gums. A preventive care scale and clean will remove any surface tartar to ensure that the gel can reach all the surfaces of your teeth.

- Any broken fillings or cracks in your teeth should be repaired before you commence whitening as these may cause an increased sensitivity during the procedure. This is not necessary if you are having whitening treatment prior to any cosmetic dental treatment.

The whitening gel dehydrates your teeth and makes them porous. It is important to eliminate food and liquid that is highly coloured from your diet. Any food that will stain a white shirt will also stain your teeth during the whitening process. Smoking should also be avoided.

**IN SURGERY WHITENING**

The Zoom! in surgery treatment involves using the gel and lamp in conjunction with each other to produce maximum whitening results in the shortest possible time. During the procedure, the whitening gel is applied to your teeth and your teeth will be exposed to the light from the Zoom! lamp for up to three (3), 20-minute sessions. During the entire treatment, a plastic retractor will be placed in your mouth to help keep it open and the soft tissues of your mouth (i.e., my lips, gums, cheeks and tongue) will be covered to ensure they are not exposed to either the gel or light. Lip balm (SPF rating: 30+) will also be applied as needed and you will be provided with an ultraviolet light filter for my eyes. After the treatment is completed, the retractor and all gel and tissue coverings will be removed from your mouth.

**AT HOME WHITENING**

The “at home” technique of whitening teeth does not require heat or light, and allows you to monitor your own progress. The amount of colour change depends on the length of time you wear the tray each day and the number of weeks you continue the treatment. The results can be unpredictable. Although effects may be noticed as early as a few days, many patients report that a minimum of two weeks is required to see a colour change.

The Procedure:

1. Before bedtime, brush and floss your teeth, in order to clean them before placement of the tray. Rinse well.
2. Place the whitening gel in the tray at each tooth position to be whitened. Use the gel only in the tray provided by us to fit your teeth.
3. Place the tray firmly over your teeth. Spit out excess gel and wear the loaded tray overnight, or for a minimum of 4-6 hours daily.
4. Repeat this technique every day for 10-14 days or as directed by your dentist.

**Zoom “White for Life” Club**

Once you have achieved your fantastic whiter smile using the Zoom in surgery whitening, we want to help you maintain the colour you have achieved by offering you a FREE lifetime supply of home top up gel (1 syringe every 12 months). The gel will be issued to you at each second, 6 month preventive care appointment. You must continue to return every 6 months for your preventive care appointments to remain a member of the white for life club. We’ll send you a reminder card, but if you forget your 6 monthly preventive care appointment, you’ll need to start buying your top up gel.