**Information on Tooth Whitening**

This is to whiten your upper and lower teeth.

The fee includes....

1. Individual assessment & explanation of what can be achieved using this technique.

2. Pre & post operative photographic records.

3. Manufacture & fitting of a custom made whitening tray.

4. Clinical monitoring throughout treatment

5. 4 x 3ml tubes of whitening gel (if you require more you can purchase it from our reception staff).

You should be aware that if you smoke, drink red wine, tea, strong coffee or eat large amounts of food containing strong colourings your teeth will gradually darken. You also need to be aware that this process will only affect NATURAL tooth tissue, NOT white fillings, veneers or crowns. If these are on your front teeth, they will become more noticeable as your natural teeth lighten in shade. Fillings and crowns may then need to be replaced on completion of treatment. Such replacements, if needed, are NOT included within this fee.

There has been a degree of controversy surround the use of peroxide containing gel to whiten teeth, this has been due to a poorly drafted EU directive and the interpretation our goverment chose to apply. This has now been amended to allow the legal supply of these products under prescription from a dentist. The muddled legal position does not reflect the safety of these products, as if used correctly and under the supervision of a dentist, they are effective and side effects are minor. Where whitening is provided without the supervision of a dentist, it is illegal under UK law, and the General Dental Council seeks to prosecute any cases reported to it (see www.gdc-uk.org). As reputable companies will only will only sell whitening gels to registered dental practices, there have been problems with the treatment provided by non dentists - either it does not work, or in some cases, considerable (and expensive to repair), harm is done to the teeth. Our whitening gel is made & supplied by Optident Ltd, and conforms to all the required legal standards.

When you achieve a shade that you are happy with, you will want to maintain it. As the shade of your teeth will gradually darken with time we recommend that you keep your tray safe and bring it along to your routine oral health review appointments. If a 'top up' is needed we can then confirm the fit of your trays and supply you with additional gel.

Whitening Gel

This is packaged as a clear, sticky gel in syringes and contains Carbamide Perioxide, which provided the hydrogen peroxide - active ingredient. It should be kept in a refrigerator to best preserve its effectiveness. Whilst this is a very safe product when used under professional supervision, we will need to review your progress regularly through the whitening process. If the gel contacts your skin please wash it off with soap & water, if contact with your eyes occurs, flush out with copious water and seek advice from your doctor if irritation persists. It is inevitable that you will ingest small amounts of the gel during this process and this is harmless. If a tube of the gel in intentionally ingested give large amount of milk, or water and seek medical advice (taking the syringe along), it is not harmful if inhaled.

Tray

This will have had its fit checked by one of our staff and needs to be both stored carefully and cleaned thoroughly after each use. This can be either with gauze or cotton wool, under a running tap of warm but not hot water, or with a tooth brush. Take care to remove all of the gel after each use as it gets progressively stickier and harder to remove if left.

Use

The main complication of this treatment is its tendancy to produce a increased sensitivity to hot & cold in the teeth on which it is used. Arround 50% of patient's experience this to some degree, though only 10% find it to be sufficient of a problem to discontinue treatment. We recommend that any cavities or old / potentially leaking fillings are dealt with prior to starting this type of treatment. This will resolve when treatment is stopped. It is also a good idea to use a sensitive toothpaste during and for several weeks after treatment is complete. If you do experience problems please ask our advice as there are other measures available which may well allow you to complete treatment.

Apply a small (half a pea sized), drop of gel to the inside front surface of each tooth cavity you intend to whiten in the tray. The very back molar teeth are unlikely to be visible in your smile and can be left off. It is useful to have a good look in the mirror and check which you need to do and which not. You can check the amount you need to apply as you do not want any air bubbles visible in the tray when seated in your mouth, but equally you want the minimum excess gel oozing out. When you have applied the gel and seated the tray, check for and bubbles - these can usually be pressed gently out and wipe any excess gel off from your gums. We would recommend that you either you leave the tray in place for 2 hrs or you may find it more convenient to simply leave it in overnight. Either will work.

On removing the tray it is important to clean your teeth carefully including flossing straight away. Then clean your tray. This can either be left in the container provided or stored in an antiseptic mouth wash such as Corsodyl or Listerine. If you have any concerns or need further advice please ask us at you review appointment or give us a ring.