



Expectations

Whitening is effective for most patients and has been proven to be safe when done properly. The length of treatment ranges from a minimum of 2 weeks up to 4-8 weeks or more for patients with darker teeth. The degree of whitening you obtain during the procedure is dependent on four factors:

1. The length of time in each 24-hour period the tray is worn (a session).
2. The number of sessions the tray is worn.
3. The susceptibility of your teeth and/or internal colors to the whitening agent.
4. Habits you have that discolor teeth, such as smoking or the consumption of coffee, tea, tomato sauce, red wine, etc.

Crowns, bridges, veneers, partial dentures, and white fillings will not whiten with this treatment.

Directions for whitening your teeth

1. Before inserting trays, brush and floss your teeth thoroughly.
2. Ensure that your trays are dry. Express a small amount of whitening gel into the deepest, outermost portions of the trays. *A large amount is not needed.*
3. Seat the trays completely onto the teeth.
4. Gently press the tray with a clean finger to adapt the soft tray material against the teeth on the inside (tongue) and the outside (lip) edges of the tooth/gum area. Use caution since pressing too firmly will express too much gel out of the tray.
5. Wipe off excess gel with a clean finger or cotton swab.
6. Do not disturb the trays when wearing by lifting with tongue, fingers, etc. Take care not to bite with pressure on the tray. This may cause excess solution to sit on the gum tissue, which can result in a tissue burn.
7. It is best to wear the trays overnight while sleeping (8-10 hours). This can be modified if you are experiencing more pain than you can handle or if you cannot tolerate wearing the trays while sleeping. Trays can be worn for 4 hours during the day OR can be worn every other night or day. If you do this, your treatment time will be lengthened, but you can still achieve the same results.
8. Remove the trays after wearing for the appropriate amount of time. Brush teeth thoroughly with toothpaste. Rinse twice; **do not swallow rinsed gel**. Brush tray gently with soft brush and rinse with cool water. Store trays in their case when not in use, but be sure they dry thoroughly so they are ready to be used for the next session.
9. After you are done whitening, you will need to **touch up** your whitening periodically (usually 1-3 times per year, depending on your eating habits). By touching up, you will be able to maintain your beautiful, white smile for years to come.

Possible side effects

Many times patients will experience increased sensitivity to cold during treatment. Some patients have reported temporary discomfort during whitening, such as gum and/or tooth sensitivity, tongue and lip soreness, or moderate, continuous teeth pain. Acidic, citric foods may increase sensitivity temporarily. Tips to reduce discomfort include:

1. **Prevident** (a high-fluoride prescription toothpaste sold at Johnson Dental) can be used daily for at least 2 weeks before whitening is started, and also throughout the duration of the whitening process.
2. **Ibuprofen or Tylenol** can be used to reduce acute pain that can be associated with whitening.
3. If sensitivity becomes too uncomfortable, or if the trays cannot be tolerated at night, trays can be worn for **4 hours during the day**. This will lengthen the total whitening time, but you will get the same great results.

If any of these symptoms occur and the above tips do not work for you and your pain is more than mild or persistent, or if you have any questions or concerns, call us at 507.645.9669. These side effects almost always resolve in 1-3 days after interruption or completion of treatment.

Precautions

1. **Avoid dark foods or drinks** that may restain your teeth for 24 hours after whitening. Examples of foods that can stain are coffee, tea, red wine, tomato sauce, tobacco, and dark berries.
2. **Do not eat** with your whitening trays in your mouth.
3. **Keep and store the whitening agent out of heat or direct sunlight** at all times to keep the whitening agent from chemically breaking down. Store unopened tubes in the refrigerator, but keep the tube you are using at room temperature to help decrease sensitivity.
4. Keep your whitening solution away from **small children and pets**.
5. NEVER use any household or commercial whitening agents in your mouth!

Whitening gel active ingredients

1. 10% carbamide peroxide: whitens teeth
2. Potassium nitrate: decreases sensitivity
3. Fluoride: strengthens enamel

Scheduling for crowns and fillings

Restorative procedures (fillings and crowns) can be scheduled **2 weeks** after the last session of whitening is completed. This is necessary for shade normalization and optimal bonding.

All instructions and information are also available on our website Johnson-Dental.com