



A Message from Your Lake Arrowhead Dentist:

Whiter Teeth for the New Year

Brushing and flossing are everyday ways to keep your teeth bright, white and healthy. Still, if you feel like your smile is lacking some sparkle or is more yellow than it used to be, you're not alone! When the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry asked people what they would most like to improve about their smile, the most common response was whiter teeth. Most dentists perform a variety of tooth whitening procedures

Why Did my Teeth Change Color ?

Food and Drink: Coffee, tea and red wine are some major staining causes containing intense color pigments, called chromogens that attach to your enamel.

Tobacco Use: Tar and nicotine in tobacco create stubborn stains.

Age: Below the enamel is a softer area called dentin. Over time the outer enamel layer gets thinner and the dentin gets darker.

Trauma: If you have been hit in the mouth your tooth (or teeth) can change color because its reacts to the injury by making more darker dentin.

Medications: Certain antihistamines, antipsychotics and high blood pressure

medications can cause tooth darkening. Chemotherapy and head and neck radiation can also darken teeth.

How does teeth whitening work ?

Teeth whitening is a simple process. Whitening products contains one of two bleaches (carbamide peroxide or hydrogen peroxide) that break stains into smaller pieces, making them less concentrated and your teeth brighter. Whitening is not a one time procedure, it will need to be repeated from time to time if you want to maintain the brighter color.

Does whitening work on all teeth ?

No, which is why you should talk to your dentist before deciding to whiten your teeth. Yellow teeth will probably bleach well, brown teeth may not respond as well and take much longer to whiten, and teeth with grey tones may not bleach at all. Whitening will not work on caps, veneers, crowns or fillings, and may not be as effective on darkening caused by medications or tooth injury.

What are my whitening choices ?

Talk to your dentist before starting, if you are a candidate, there are three primary ways to put some sparkle back in your smile.

1) Whitening Toothpastes are fine to help remove surface stain by using mild abrasives that scrub the teeth. Look for the ADA Seal for safe whitening toothpastes; these products will not change the color of your teeth, only removing surface stain. If you have gum recession present these toothpastes could be too abrasive for you.

2) In-Office Bleaching usually requires one to three dental office visits depending on how severe your stains are and how white you want your teeth to be. Your dentist may suggest that you continue the bleaching process at home for a few days or weeks. This approach is for people who want their teeth whiter NOW. ZOOM Whitening is an example of this technique.

3) At-Home Bleaching uses peroxide-containing whiteners to actually bleach the tooth enamel. They typically come in a gel and are placed in a custom tray that fits closely on your teeth to help the whitening agent remain in contact with your teeth and not your gums. These custom trays are made by your dentist from an impression of your teeth. **THIS IS THE EASIEST, MOST PREDICTABLE WAY TO ACHIEVE THE AMOUNT OF WHITENING MOST PEOPLE WANT** within a week or two. Darker teeth will require longer treatment times.

You may also try whitening strips (Crest 3D White LUXE Supreme Flexfit is probably the best) purchased in a store or online. Comments from users: "takes some finesse and patience to ensure they adhere," "I do not use them daily, my teeth get too sensitive," "you cannot get a better outcome from a product you buy in the store." 55% of users recommend this product.

To whiten or not to whiten, the choice is yours ! Consult with your dentist before you start for the best recommendation that fits your lifestyle and expectations.

Yours for better dental health,

Hugh A. Bialecki, D.M.D.

LakeArrowheadDentist.com

909.337.0705

Grass Valley Road at Club House Drive