

Care Instructions Following Internal Tooth Whitening

Today we removed some of the old filling from behind your dark, previously root treated tooth. We then placed a thin layer of glass ionomer cement to seal off the root canal system, and filled the inside of the tooth with a whitening gel. The small hole in the back of the tooth has been filled with a temporary filling. This material tastes like Oil of Cloves and you may perceive this taste for several days. This material will be soft when you leave our practice, but will gradually harden over the next few hours. It is important that you do not "feel" it with your tongue, or push on it, as it may break away and let the whitening gel out. Be careful eating until your next appointment, as hard foods may break this temporary filling. Please call us immediately if your temporary filling comes out.

Is It Uncomfortable?

The whitening gel placed in your tooth can sometimes touch and singe the gum on the way in. If you feel some very mild discomfort in the gum around the tooth, this will quickly pass. Occasionally, some people will feel more discomfort coming from the tooth on the first day or two after the appointment. Again, this will normally pass quickly, but please let us know so that we can record it in your file.

What Will I See?

The tooth will usually begin to change colour immediately, and will continue to change for up to one to two weeks. We will normally schedule your next appointment after two weeks to allow the maximum time for possible colour improvement.

What Happens Next?

At your next appointment, we will decide whether to seal up the tooth with a new permanent filling, or whether to re-apply some more whitening gel. The decision will depend on the colour your tooth has achieved and whether we think it can be improved further. Some teeth show complete improvement after just one application of gel, and so they can be permanently filled at the second appointment. However, all teeth are different and so another person's tooth may need a second or even a third application of gel to achieve the desired colour, before finally being permanently restored.

How Long Will It Last?

The effects of internal whitening are not usually permanent. The original discolouration will gradually return to the tooth and in most instances, this may take anywhere between two to seven or more years to occur. If the colour begins to return, you may be able to undertake the more simple process of external whitening which is a home-based system we can provide you with, but this must commence early in the colour relapse process. Regular use of such an external system (using low concentration gels) may keep the colour perfect for a very long time, or indefinitely. If however the tooth is allowed to regain most of its original discolouration, then external whitening may not work and instead it may be possible to undergo the same internal procedure again, to whiten it up to its original shade.



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