



“The Tooth and Nothing but The Tooth”

by
Chris ‘Dr. Smile Maker’
Branfield

Life Changing Dentistry – Tooth Whitening

Hello everybody, I hope that you have had a great month. As I write this the sun is shining and it is lovely to be out. It's not particularly warm but I'll take dry and sunny and be glad of it. How was your Easter weekend? We had our first caravanning jaunt. A bit muddy, with the rain, but it was enjoyable all the same. Burton Constable is a lovely spot and only a stone throw away.

You Can't Put It Down Can You?

Now then, I've been banging on about tooth whitening for a bit and I bet you thought that was that. Oh no, not on your life. I thought I could squeeze yet another can't put down, enthralling episode for you to digest.

Is It Vital Or Not?

Most of what the whitening techniques that are available are aimed at whitening “vital” teeth. So what is a vital tooth I here you cry. Well,

a vital tooth has its nerve (dental pulp) intact. A so-called non-vital tooth is a tooth that no longer has a vital nerve. In other words the nerve has died off. This can happen for a number of reasons including bacteria from decay or following trauma. An interesting reason (well, to dental anorak like myself anyway) is when there is no decay or been any trauma. Bacteria are getting at your teeth and inside your teeth all the time. All fillings and in fact teeth leak to some extent. When teeth have fillings the dental pulp can become more fibrous and not withstand the assault by bacteria that it once could.

This may lead to the pulp dying and becoming non-vital and abscessing as the bacteria run riot. When this happens, and especially in a thinner front tooth, the tooth can become darker. The treatment to save the tooth is root canal treatment dgh, dgh, dgggghhhh! The treatment that begins with R. This can be a really successful treatment and we do have people who fall asleep during it so it's not as bad as you might think more often than not. So, once saved how do you make it whiter?

Decisions, Decisions, Decisions

In an ideal world there will still be plenty of tooth left and it is great to be conservative and try not to remove any more natural tooth structure, i.e. not to grind any more away. This is where whitening comes into its own. This time the whitening is done from the inside of the tooth because it is right inside of the tooth where the discolouration has taken place and it would be asking too much of the whitening gel to permeate its active ingredients that far in from the outside. The tooth needs to be prepared ready for the whitening process and this requires no numbing as the tooth has no nerve, which is a bonus. After this preparation there is a choice of which technique to use or to mix and match. As with most things in life it is horses for courses.

Do You Need The Power, To Walk Or To Go Inside Out?

Has “Dr Smile Maker” lost the plot and stated talking gobbledygook? Of course not. Stay with me. One technique is the so-called walking whitening. This is when a whitening agent is temporarily sealed inside the tooth for a time, often for a week or two. This works well for fairly mild darkening. Another technique is the inside out technique. This is similar to the professional tray whitening and is done at home. The difference is that there is an access hole left in the tooth in question. It is most often a front tooth and the hole is the back of it and not usually noticeable so don't be horrified. The tricky bit is keeping the hole clean and putting a temporary bung in to stop gubbins getting in. The great thing about this method is that you can whiten the rest of the teeth at the same time. The final technique is the professional non-vital power whitening.

This is when a more intense whitening is done in the dental chair either with or without a so-called activating light. This is often more appropriate when there more severe darkening taken place. This can also be done in conjunction with the other methods to get the desired result. Whitening like this could be done before a veneer is placed to avoid excessive grinding of tooth surface away that would otherwise be needed to give a thickness of porcelain to mask the discolouration. Also opaque veneers tend to look a bit false and lifeless. So there you have it, a relatively quick perusal through the wonderful world of tooth whitening.

“Torture”

My son, Edward, submitted a short poem and has managed to get it published in a book. I am really chuffed with him. What do you think?

The Torture

People running, fighting, screaming. We are cramped into one small corner, ready for our torture. It all goes silent. A figure appears in front of us, all gloomy and black, clenching something in their hand. Complete fear on our faces....

“Sit”

We do and she writes on the board. “Poetry”

Take care and be good.

Chris

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