



Tooth Whitening

Patient Information



What is tooth whitening?

Tooth whitening is an effective way of lightening the natural colour of your teeth without removing any of your tooth's surface.

Unfortunately in everyday life the microscopic pores of your teeth are pigmented with substances such as red wine, coffee and tobacco. These, along with age related changes give your smile a stained and discoloured appearance. No matter how many times you brush your teeth they will continue to darken with time.

Now with whitening procedures you can reverse this process, bringing back that younger, brighter, whiter smile. Professional dental tooth whitening removes the internal stains not just the external ones to achieve a brighter look without harming the original tooth structure in any way.



Who can whiten teeth - rules and regulations?

Teeth whitening is considered to be the practice of dentistry and can only be provided by registered dental professionals. Anybody carrying out tooth whitening other than a qualified dental professional is doing it illegally. There is also a legal age limit for tooth whitening. You have to be at least 18 years old.

The law states that tooth whitening products containing more than 0.1% hydrogen peroxide can only be sold to registered dental professionals. This means that any tooth whitening kits that you can buy over the counter can legally only contain less than 0.1% hydrogen peroxide. This concentration is too low to have any noticeable whitening effect.

What whitening options do Langmans provide?

We offer the following tooth whitening options:

- Philips Zoom! In surgery whitening
- Home Whitening

In Surgery Whitening

Philips Zoom! is a quick and easy way to effectively whiten teeth. The treatment itself is undertaken by one of our trained hygienists working to a prescription from your dentist. The actual whitening lasts for approximately one hour, however the total appointment may take up to two hours.

PHILIPS
ZOOM!

If you are looking for instant gratification, this is your best choice. The procedure has been perfected through years of dental use and is explained in detail on the following page.

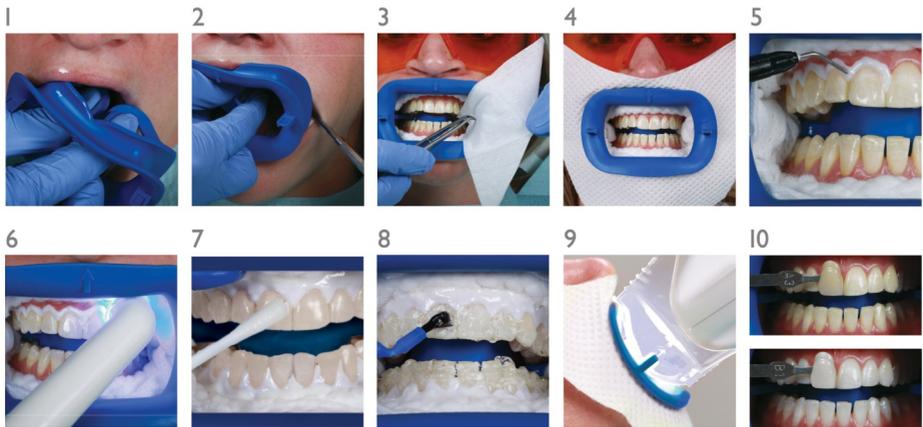


Philips Zoom! In surgery Whitening Procedure

A soft silicone lip retractor is placed in your mouth to protect your lips and give access to your teeth allowing you to rest comfortably during the treatment. We then attach a face bib to this to protect your chin and cheeks.

Your gums are carefully protected with a special barrier covering and the whitening gel is applied to your teeth. The Philips Zoom! Lamp is activated for 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, fresh whitening gel is applied and the lamp set for another 15 minutes. A further two 15 minute sessions follow.

At the end of 60 minutes your hygienist will remove all of the gel and barrier material and you will be able to see your newly whitened teeth.



For optimal results we recommend that our patients continue with the whitening at home for a further week. A home whitening top up kit is included and you will be shown how to use this.

Home Whitening

Home whitening involves wearing custom whitening trays made from impressions taken of your teeth. These trays are worn every day/night for a set amount of time.

We offer two types of whitening gel. One for patients who prefer to whiten their teeth during the day. The other is for patients who prefer to wear the trays over night. Your dentist will discuss these options with you and will show you how the trays work.

We advise that it usually takes 2 weeks to see noticeable results but the exact duration of your treatment will depend on the degree of lightening desired. Your dentist will discuss this with you and advise how long you should continue to wear the trays to achieve this result.



Decided you want teeth whitening? - The Next Step:

If you are interested in whitening the first thing that needs to happen is to make an appointment with your dentist to check that you are suitable. Patients with gum disease, cavities etc need to be dentally fit before starting treatment.

You may be advised that you need a Hygiene/Airflow appointment prior to starting whitening treatment to remove any deposits on your teeth. The whitening gel will not get through the deposit to reach the tooth.

If the dentist is happy that you are suitable for whitening they will take impressions of your teeth to enable customised whitening trays to be made. You will need these for both home whitening and topping up after in surgery whitening. You will then be made a follow up appointment for in surgery whitening or home whitening.

Frequently asked questions

Can all teeth be whitened?

Only natural tooth can be whitened. Tooth coloured fillings or crowns will not change shade. If you have any of these that show when you smile you may wish to have them changed to match the new tooth colour. Your dentist can provide you with a quote to do this.

How long will my teeth take to whiten?

This all depends on the starting colour of your teeth and the result you are looking to achieve. If your teeth are dark to start off with it will take longer to lighten them. Tetracycline stained teeth can take 6 months or more.

A full course of home whitening treatment is 14 days by which time most patients see a difference. Some patients may choose to continue with whitening to reach their desired shade. Your dentist can advise you on this at your follow up review appointment.

Patients choosing the in-surgery whitening will have a more instant result. Teeth can whiten by several shades during the session and for optimum results we recommend a few days of home whitening following this treatment (the home whitening top up kit is included in the price).

Will it hurt?

The most common side effect of teeth whitening is sensitivity. This usually occurs around the necks of the teeth where the gum has receded. The whitening gels we use do have desensitiser in them, however if you are experiencing sensitivity there are a few things you can do:

- Use sensitive toothpaste during the treatment and rub a small amount on any areas that are sensitive.
- Put sensitive toothpaste in the bleaching trays and wear for an hour each day.
- You can stop the whitening for a day/night if the sensitivity is too severe and then resume.

If you are at all concerned please contact your dentist.

What is used to whiten teeth?

The whitening gel we use contains either hydrogen peroxide or carbamide peroxide. Carbamide peroxide breaks down to release hydrogen peroxide which is the active ingredient in tooth whitening.

How long do the results last?

Generally it is thought to last for up to 3 years. This will however vary from person to person depending on the types of food and drink consumed. Certain foods such as curries, red wine, tea, coffee and cola will stain the teeth again and are best avoided as much as possible. Nicotine will also cause stains. We have top up gel kits available to purchase which you can use with your trays if you feel they need a boost.

Is Teeth Whitening Safe?

Safety studies have shown that tooth whitening prescribed by a dentist is perfectly safe. The whitening material has a pH which is neutral, equivalent to drinking one soda drink.

There are problems with the whitening kits that can be purchased over the counter or on the internet. Although they are less expensive, they normally contain an acid rinse which can damage the teeth or thin down the enamel of the teeth. This is extremely harmful to teeth.

How much does it cost?

Tooth whitening is not available on the NHS. Please ask at reception or your dentist for our current prices. 0% Interest Free Finance is also available. Please ask for details.

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