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### What are the basic whitening instructions?

Start the whitening process by brushing your teeth. Rinse well. Place a dot of bleaching gel in the front portion of the custom fitted tray and spread the gel with the syringe tip. Place the trays on your teeth and gently press the tray to move the gel into place. Wipe away any excess gel on the gum tissue with your finger or a tissue and spit out any excess. Wear the trays for 1-2 hours or overnight, depending on the bleach being utilized. Remove the trays. Wipe the gel out with a tissue and use a toothbrush with water (no paste) to clean the trays thoroughly.

### How long will it take for my teeth to whiten?

Every individual whitens at a different rate, but the average time that most people notice a color change is wearing the trays daily for 2-3 weeks. Yellow and brown stains bleach faster than blue or grey stained (tetracycline-stained) teeth.

### Is it normal for my teeth to be sensitive?

Sensitivity is one of the most common side effects from bleaching. It is also a common experience little 'zings' in the teeth during the process and even a day or two afterwards. If this occurs and is not tolerable, you may want to change the schedule to every 2nd or 3rd day or night. To help in preventing or temporarily reducing sensitivity, you may choose to use a sensitivity toothpaste which will typically take 4-6 weeks for a noticeable improvement.

### Can I whiten my teeth if I have periodontal disease?

Patients with periodontal disease or with excessive root surface exposure may notice significant sensitivity. Using a sensitivity toothpaste and nighttime fluoride rinse to help desensitize your teeth prior to tooth bleaching will help.

### It is normal for my gums or teeth to have white spots?

It is common to see white areas on the gum tissue or teeth after removing the trays from your mouth. Do not panic as they will disappear usually within the hour. Try to remove as much excess gel from the gum tissue to prevent this from occurring on your gum tissue.

### Why are my teeth not whitening evenly?

The canine teeth are usually the darkest teeth and will require more time to whiten. Teeth are naturally darker near the gum line due to the thinness of the enamel. It may take more time to lighten these areas and will usually remain

slightly darker than the rest of the tooth. If some teeth are lighter than others you can 'catch up' by placing gel in the tray to the corresponding darker teeth.

#### Are there certain foods & drinks that I should avoid?

Coffee, tea, tobacco, dark soda, red wine, cherries, blueberries, and tomato sauce can all discolor teeth and should be avoided during the entire whitening process. Anything that will stain a white shirt may stain your teeth.

#### Will my white fillings and crowns whiten?

Surface stains on fillings may lighten during the whitening process, however the filling itself, as well as crowns, will not whiten. Fillings and crowns may need to be replaced if you are not satisfied with the color match.

#### Where should I store bleaching gel?

You can increase the shelf life of the gel by storing it in the refrigerator. Take the gel out 1 hour before whitening or place the gel under warm water prior to loading your trays to get the gel to room temperature.

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If you have questions or concerns, please call the office so we may address them on a case-by-case basis.

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