

**INFORMED CONSENT FOR IN-OFFICE WHITENING**

**Patient:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**General Information:**

Bleaching, also called tooth whitening, is a procedure that is designed to lighten the color of your teeth. When done properly, bleaching will not harm your teeth or gums. Significant lightening can be achieved in the majority of cases, but the RESULTS CANNOT BE GUARANTEED. Bleaching, like any other treatment, has some inherent risks and limitations. These are seldom serious enough to discourage you from having your teeth bleached, but should be considered in making a decision to have the treatment.

In addition, there are variables such as the type of discoloration that affects your teeth, the degree to which to follow our instructions, and the overall condition of your teeth that can affect the outcome of treatment.

**Candidates for Bleaching:**

Almost anyone is a candidate for bleaching. However, people with dark yellow or yellowish-brown teeth tend to bleach better than people with gray or bluish-gray teeth. Multi-colored teeth, especially if stained due to tetracycline, do not bleach very well or require longer bleach times. In addition, teeth with many fillings, cavities, chips, etc., are usually best treated by bonding, porcelain veneers, or porcelain crowns.

**Types of Bleaching:**

**Power Bleaching:** This Process can usually be done in one visit, but may require two or more visits depending on how your teeth respond to the bleach. Each appointment takes about 1-1.5 hours. Due to the strong bleach used in this procedure, your gums need to be protected by either a resin or rubber shield. Then the bleach is applied and allowed to coat your teeth to lighten them. With some bleaching systems, a special high intensity light may be used to help activate the bleach. Power bleaching can also be done to lighten a tooth that has had a root canal. In this case, the tooth is bleached by the inside and the outside.

**Advantages of power bleaching:**

1. We do all the work for you
2. Less overall time spent bleaching your teeth

**Disadvantages of power bleaching:**

1. Normal inconveniences of any dental treatment such as having your mouth open for the duration of the appointment.
2. Can be more expensive compared to homes bleaching

**Home Bleaching:** This process can be done any time. It involves wearing a custom-made bleaching tray that looks like a thin, transparent night guard; inside the night guard holds bleaching gel. You then need to wear the bleach-filled tray a specific number of hours per day (per our instructions, usually 1-3 weeks. WE will typically check your bleaching progress once a week or as necessary during the period you are using the bleaching gel.

**Advantages of home bleaching:**

1. Convenience to bleach your teeth at any place
2. Usually less cost compared to power bleaching

**Disadvantages of home bleaching:**

1. Inconvenience of wearing a bleaching tray
2. Results depend on your consistent use of the bleach

**Your Responsibilities:**

**Keep Your Appointments:** When power bleaching is one, there seems to be more lightening when you appointments (if more than one) are spaced 1-2 weeks apart. If more than two weeks pass between appointments, some momentum may be lost and the bleaching results may take longer to achieve.

**Wearing Your Bleaching Tray:** If you choose home bleaching, it will only be effective if you conscientiously wear the bleaching tray for the prescribed number of hours per day..

**Communication:** If you experience severe discomfort or any other problems, contact us immediately.

**Potential Problems:**

**Tooth Sensitivity:** During the first 24 hours following bleaching, many patients experience sensitivity. This sensitivity is usually mild if your teeth are nor normally sensitive. With power bleaching, this sensitivity will usually subside within 1-2 days. With home bleaching, it may be necessary to reduce the number of hours you wear the bleaching tray or stop using it for a short time to resolve the sensitivity.

However, if your teeth are normally sensitive, bleaching may make your teeth much more sensitive for an extended period of time. Under these circumstances, you may choose to delay bleaching until we are able to complete desensitization procedures. If your teeth are sensitive after bleaching, a mild analgesic such as Tylenol or Advil will usually be effective to make you more comfortable until your teeth return to normal.

**Gum Irritation:** Bleaching may cause temporary inflammation of your gums. With power bleaching, this can be the result of very small amounts of bleaching leaking under the gum protection. A burning sensation in your gums may also occur. This is a minor problem and will subside in a few days.

With home bleaching, irritation can result from using the bleaching tray too many hours when you first start bleaching or using the bleaching tray too many hours in a row without a break. It may be necessary for you to reduce the number of hours you are wearing the bleaching tray or stop using it for a short time to resolve these gum problems. The bleaching tray may also overlap your gums, allowing the bleaching to contact your gums for an extended period. This problem can easily be resolved by our trimming the tray slightly short of your gums.

**Sore Throat:** Most home bleaches are very thick and will not run down your throat if you load the bleaching tray with home bleach. However, if your bleach is lower in viscosity, the excess may go down your throat and cause soreness. This soreness will also subside in several days, assuming you spit out the excess bleach instead of swallowing it.

**Leaking Fillings or Cavities:** Most bleaching is indicated for the outside of the teeth (unless you have a root canal). However, if you have any fillings that are leaking and allow the bleach to get inside the tooth, damage to the nerves of the teeth could result. In this case, the fillings need to be redone prior to the bleaching. In addition, open cavities can also allow bleach to reach the nerves of the teeth. They should also be filled before bleaching.

**Cervical Abrasion/Erosion:** These conditions affect the roots where the gums recede. They are the grooves, notches, or depressions where the teeth meet the gums that look darker than other teeth. They look darker because there is no enamel in these areas. Even if these areas are not sensitive, bleaching can periodically penetrate the teeth and damage the nerves. These areas should not be bleached and should be filled after bleaching is complete.

**Temporomandibular Joint:** Wearing a bleaching tray may cause pain in your TMJ (jaw joint). Merely reducing the wear time usually resolves this problem.

**Completion of Treatment:**

**Level of Lightening:** There is no reliable way to predict how light your teeth will bleach. With power bleaching, 1-2 sessions are usually necessary to significantly whiten your teeth. With home bleaching, 1-3 weeks of wearing the bleaching tray daily for the prescribed number of hours will give you much lighter teeth. Additional bleaching may provide slightly more whitening, but increased side effects may occur. We do not recommend home bleaching longer than four weeks, unless you have severe tetracycline staining.

**Relapse:** Once bleaching is completed, there may be a gradual relapse back to the original color. To reverse this relapse, a power bleach touchup treatment may be necessary after 6-12 months. With home bleaching, you may choose to wear your bleaching tray once a month to prevent a relapse from occurring at all.

**I have read and understand the bleaching procedure. The above information has been explained to me and I have had the opportunity to ask questions. I consent to this treatment.**

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Patient Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Witness Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Before BLEACHING shade: \_\_\_\_\_ After BLEACHING is: \_\_\_\_\_

**I approve of the results and am satisfied with the end shade results:**

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Patient Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_