



SMILE YOUR BEST WITH TOOTH WHITENING

Now that the holiday season is near we will all be around more people than ever. It's a terrific time of year celebrating and enjoying those that we care for the most. It's a time of laughing, joking, telling great stories, and putting your smile on display. Each morning when we get ready for the day we look in the mirror and see ourselves. Is your smile what you want it to be?

Just as people have different skin and hair color, people also have different tooth color. Some teeth are more yellow, and others yellow with aging. Natural tooth color can be discolored by a number of causes. The surface of the teeth can be stained by many substances including tobacco, coffee, tea, and by deposits of tartar. Discoloration of the teeth internally can result from aging, injury, and by taking the antibiotic tetracycline during early childhood.

The really exciting news is that now you can whiten your teeth giving you the smile that you really want. There are two types of whitening procedures. Whitening may be done completely in the dental office, or you may whiten your teeth at home using a system prescribed by the dentist.

The procedure that is done in the dental office takes from up to 60 to 90 minutes. To protect the mouth, a gel-like substance may be applied to the gums and a rubber "shield" is placed around the necks of the teeth. A

chemical solution, the oxidizing agent, is then “painted” on the teeth. A special light may be used at five-minute intervals to help activate the agent. After several intervals you and your dentist will then determine when your teeth are as whitened as you want and how white they can become.

Whitening may also be done with a home use system. Your dentist makes an impression for a model of your teeth, and creates a custom-fitted appliance and then prescribes a whitening agent that comes in the form of a whitening gel. The gel is placed in the appliance and worn up to one or two hours daily or at night for about two weeks. The amount of time the appliance is worn and the duration may vary according to your needs and your dentist’s recommendations. After completion of the home whitening program, whitening lasts one to three years in most cases, and in some situations, may even last longer. The nice thing about home whitening is that you can always “update” the whiteness of your teeth without any further visits to the dentist! For the best results with any whitening procedure, it is usually best to whiten the teeth a shade lighter than desired, since teeth darken with time. If you have had tooth-colored crowns, bonding or white restorations placed, talk with your dentist, since these materials may be a different shade of color than newly whitened teeth.

Ask us about the changes whitening your teeth may add to your smile. Dentistry today offers you the choice of enjoying all the holiday season with the countenance that a confidant smile affords.

Dr. Foltz practices dentistry in Norcross, GA and can be reached at (770) 449-0099.