

# BLEACHING TEETH OUTSIDE OF THE DENTAL OFFICE

Hydrogen peroxide has been used for many years to bleach teeth. In the past, an application of a peroxide solution was used, usually accompanied with heat and/or light, performed only in the dental office, with mixed results. Now in the format of carbamide peroxide an application can be made to the teeth utilizing soft plastic trays at home supervised by the patient. For most people the technique is easy and highly effective. This technique usually follows a modernized power bleaching process performed in our office utilizing a stronger concentration of bleach gel. As with other forms of tooth bleaching, occasional upgrade applications utilizing the soft trays may assist in maintaining the bleaching process.

## TREATMENT REGIMEN OPTIONS:

1. Night-time wear: Salivary flow decreases during sleep allowing less dilution of the bleach material. In addition, the lowered mouth activity prevents “pumping” of the material from the tray. The negatives to this option are the potential ingestion of the peroxide solution and greater sensitivity potential. This option usually provides the fastest course of treatment. Average wear time is 4-6 hours.
2. Day-time wear: Application times of 1-2 hours, once or twice a day, will bring about the most effective result with this option. Patients tend to experience less sensitivity, however, the results will be slower for most cases. This option is definitely recommended for problem sleepers and those needing to wear orthodontic appliances at night.
3. Customized wear: A combination of the first two options is often attempted by patients. Due to scheduling difficulty, patient’s needs, and the level of sensitivity one can determine a bleaching schedule that is right just for oneself. There must always be at least a two hour time period between day and night time wear. Please note that stopping for multiple nights does not jeopardize continued bleaching when reinitiated.

## GENERAL SOFT TRAY PROCEDURE:

1. Floss teeth, then brush thoroughly to improve surface contact for the bleaching gels.
2. Apply a small amount of gel (desensitize or bleach) into each tooth compartment within the tray, mostly to the outside wall of the associated tray. Dry off all the affected teeth with tissue, then apply both upper and lower trays over the teeth.
3. Remove any excess gel on the gum tissue with one’s finger or a tissue to reduce potential irritation of the soft tissue areas.
4. Clean bleach mouthguard thoroughly after use with a toothbrush and cold water. Rinse and brush excess gel from teeth with a fluoride containing toothpaste.

## SPECIFIC TECHNIQUE:

1. On the first two nights utilize the desensitizing gel only throughout the entire night.
2. On the third night utilize the 10% bleach gel for only two hours.
3. Assuming minimal sensitivity exists, on the fourth night utilize the 10% bleach gel throughout the entire night. Repeat this process each night as possible.
4. Continue using all the 10% bleach gel until finished with the dispensed amount.
5. Initiate 15% bleach gel in the same fashion as long as sensitivity is controlled.
6. Discontinue or reduce frequency of the bleach process if tooth sensitivity, gum irritation, or any other negative event occurs. Please notify our office if questions or concerns arise so that we may guide the bleaching process.