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The Basics Of Teeth Whitening Gels

You may wake up one day noticing that your teeth have gradually turned yellow or into a duller color. Even those of us in our 20s already begin to notice staining or discoloration in our teeth. The good news is advanced technology has made teeth whitening gels affordable and available to everyone.

First of All, What are Teeth Whitening Gels?

Whitening gels are agents that bleach teeth so that they appear whiter. A whitening gel normally contains 10 to 35 percent hydrogen peroxide depending on levels of concentration. Bleaching agents may be carbamide peroxide or hydrogen peroxide. The gel contains concentrations of oxidizing agents that is painted on the gums and papilla.

How Are Whitening Gels Applied?

Typically gel is poured into a tray and directly applied to the teeth for 4 to 8 hours. The time required for this procedure can be lessened by the use of laser light.

Your dentist may apply whitening gel to your teeth during an office visit. This is also called professional teeth bleaching. In this case, your dentist uses a customized mouthpiece derived from the mold of your teeth. This is a very accurate procedure, as the gel will coat your teeth more evenly.

You may also purchase teeth whitening gels over the counter and apply them in the convenience of your own home. Some kits contain a mouthguard or strip to hold the gel over your teeth. Application may require many hours per day for up to 14 days to a month. It may take longer for effects to show with this method, but it is often considered gentler on your gums and teeth.

Are There Any Risks Involved?

As with most procedures there are some risks involved in using teeth whitening gels. However, these risks are often very minute. The main risks lie in tooth sensitivity and mild irritation of soft tissues or gums. Sometimes, sensitivity occurs because of the tray fitted into the mouth rather than the bleaching agent itself.

Regardless of what whitening method you use, it's always best to consult a dentist. This is especially advisable for those with defective restorations, sensitive teeth and gums, or receding gums. If you are aged 16 or below, pregnant or lactating, you should not be using whitening gels.

How Do I Maintain Whiter Teeth?

Teeth whitening gels are generally safe and effective. But if you want best results and long-lasting effects, you should consider using other products alongside your teeth whitening gel. This is a good idea if you are sensitive to bleaching or not ready to give up wine, coffee, or tea. You can purchase whitening toothpastes and mouthwashes, which contain weak forms of teeth whitening gel. There are also products that act to lessen sensitivity.

Now that you know the basics of teeth whitening gels, it's important to remember that these are most effective when used with teeth-whitening practices such as using additional bleach-containing products and avoiding certain habits known to stain or cause discoloration. These habits include drinking coffee and smoking.

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