



THE BLOCKLEY PARTNERSHIP

*Working together for your dental health*

# Teeth Whitening

There are several ways to whiten teeth if a simple scale and polish from the hygienist is not enough.

Teeth do naturally darken as we age. Without restoring to more extensive, irreversible treatments such as crowns or veneers, it is often possible to whiten teeth with bleaching techniques. However, existing fillings, crowns and veneers will not respond to tooth whitening.

## Internal whitening

This is generally used if there is darkening to a single tooth. Often these teeth have previously been traumatised or damaged and had to have their nerve removed. This will usually be followed by a root canal treatment. The tooth darkens as a result of residual blood pigment and bacterial breakdown products within the dentine. These teeth can be whitened using a simple technique that involves wearing a whitening tray continually over a few days whilst periodically placing a whitening gel into the tray and the back of the affected tooth.



## External whitening

This is to create an overall lightening of the teeth and can be done with a "Power Whitener" or with "Bleaching Trays". The former involves applying a gel to the outer surfaces of the teeth and activating it with a light. The latter involves fabricating thin transparent PVC trays that are worn over the teeth – either at night or for about 2 hours a day over a period of between 3 and 8 weeks. The "Bleaching Tray" is the method that we would normally advocate as it generally gives a more stable, long-term result and can be used to periodically 'top up' the whitening. Again both techniques are pain-free and perfectly safe.



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