

## POST-OP TEETH WHITENING

| DOB:

### *Post-Operative Care Instructions*

Congratulations! You are on your way to brighter, whiter teeth. The following is a list of the most common post-whitening symptoms and our tried-and-true instructions to maximize your results and maintain the smile you deserve!

#### **Tooth Sensitivity**

During the first 24 hours after a whitening treatment, some patients can experience some tooth sensitivity or pain. This is normal and is usually mild, but it can be worse in susceptible individuals. Normally, tooth sensitivity or pain following a treatment subsides within 24 hours, but in rare cases can persist for longer periods of time in susceptible individuals. People with existing sensitivity, recession, exposed dentin, exposed root surfaces, recently cracked teeth, abfractions (micro-cracks), open cavities, leaking fillings, or other dental conditions that cause sensitivity or allow penetration of the gel into the tooth may find that those conditions increase or prolong tooth sensitivity or pain after whitening treatment.

#### **Pain**

- If your teeth are sensitive after whitening, a mild analgesic such as Tylenol or Advil will usually be effective in making you more comfortable until your tooth sensitivity returns to normal.
- We also recommend using sensitivity toothpaste for 7-10 days following your whitening procedure.

#### **Gum, Lip, or Cheek Inflammation**

- Whitening may cause inflammation of your gums, lips, or cheek margins. This is due to inadvertent exposure of a small area of those tissues to the whitening gel or the ultraviolet light.
- The inflammation is usually temporary which will subside in a few days but may persist longer and may result in significant pain or discomfort, depending on the degree to which the soft tissues were exposed to the gel.

#### **Dry or Chapped Lips**

The whitening treatment involves three, 15-minute sessions during which the mouth is kept open continuously for the entire treatment by a plastic retractor. This could result in dryness or chapping of the lips or cheek margins, which can be treated by the application of lip balm, petroleum jelly, or Vitamin E cream.

#### **Cavities or Leaking Fillings**

Most dental whitening is indicated for the outside of the teeth, except for patients who have already undergone a root canal procedure. If any open cavities or fillings that are leaking and allowing the gel to penetrate the tooth are present, significant pain could result. I understand that if my teeth have these conditions, I should have my cavities filled or my fillings redone before undergoing the whitening treatment.

#### **Cervical Abrasion or Erosion**

These are conditions that affect the roots of the teeth when the gums recede and they are characterized by grooves, notches, and/or depressions, that appear darker than the rest of the teeth, where the teeth meet the gums. These areas appear darker because they lack the enamel that covers the rest of the teeth. Even if these areas are not currently sensitive, they can allow the whitening gel to penetrate the teeth, causing sensitivity.

#### **Root Resorption**

This is a condition where the root of the tooth starts to dissolve either from the inside or outside. Although the

cause of this is still uncertain, I understand that there is evidence that indicates the incidence of root resorption is higher in patients who have undergone root canals followed by whitening procedures.

### **Relapse**

After the whitening treatment, it is natural for the teeth that underwent treatment to regress somewhat in their shading after treatment. This is natural and should be very gradual, but it can be accelerated by exposing the teeth to various staining agents. Treatment usually involves wearing a take-home tray or repeating the whitening treatment.

### ***Additional Ways To Maintain Your Sparkling Smile!***

- Avoid staining related habits - repetitive coffee, tea, and wine drinking
- Use a dentist or dental hygienist approved electric toothbrush.
- Regular professional dental hygiene care to maintain oral health, keep staining to a minimum.
- Use whitening trays for touch-ups as recommended by the dentist.
- Practice good oral hygiene by tooth brushing, flossing, and tongue cleaning. We will assist you in selecting the products to maintain not only a white smile but a healthy one as well!

If you have any questions or need an appointment, please call us at (703) 763-1078.

Patient's signature:

Date:

General Dentist's signature:

Date: