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The Cost of Teeth Whitening

By Karen Turner, WhiteHot Smile

Few things make a more favourable first impression than a dazzling white smile. Luckily consumers today are able to get a brighter, whiter and more confident smile with more choices than ever before.

Teeth whitening is big business – close to 2 billion dollars this year alone. If your teeth are whiter – you look better and feel better. It seems that good looks and a great smile are becoming ever more expected and important in our society. Celebrities are spending thousands of dollars to create the perfect smile using cosmetic dentistry procedure, but the need to have a whiter, brighter smile now moving on to mainstream North America. These days, it's much more accessible to find teeth whitening methods at affordable prices.

Most people's teeth are not naturally white. A natural tooth has a slight yellow hint to it. People's teeth become stained by drinking, eating and smoking habits. Drinking pop, coffee and smoking will cause the teeth to become stained and the stains can be removed with teeth whitening products.

Teeth whitening are a personal preference and it's up to you to decide if it's worth it. There are various methods to make teeth whiter.

Dental office teeth whitening – if you have decided to want dentist supervised teeth whitening you may choose laser treatment – frequently called zoom bleaching. The dentist will do a light cleaning on the patient's teeth and then use a peroxide solution to cover the teeth. The dentist then uses argon or a laser beam to bleach the teeth. This is one of the most expensive teeth whitening methods ranging from \$400 to \$800.

The dental at home teeth whitening procedure uses a peroxide gel which is applied to a custom-fitted mouth tray prepared to each patient. The patient has to wear the mouth tray with the whitening gel for a few hours a day for a determined length of time decided by the dentist. The cost of this procedure is \$300 to \$350.

The advantage of a dentist supervised whitening is that the dentist can determine what type of treatment the patient needs, the concentration of peroxide in the whitening gel

and that it is supervised by a professional. The disadvantage of in office tooth bleaching is the cost.

Teeth whitening gel – the gel whitening is fairly simple. There is an active ingredient in the formula that is either hydrogen peroxide or carbamide peroxide. This is used in combination with a UV light. When the peroxide in the gel makes contact with the teeth its molecules start to split. The loose oxygen molecules are consequently unstable and start to search for another bond. At this point they begin working their way through the enamel searching for new electrons for stability. Once they find the stain molecules, the oxygen molecules break the compounds apart and the stains dissolve. The availability of this service is growing. Look for it at cosmetic doctor's offices and salons. Cost can vary depending on the number of treatments required \$129 to \$450.

At home teeth whitening – if you want to skip the high cost of the dental office and only want to get your teeth a couple of shades whiter you may have decided to use the over the counter teeth whitening kits which can cost anywhere between \$7 and \$150. Teeth whitening strips are used by placing the thin strip of film directly only the front of the teeth. Depending on the style and brand the amount of time the strip is left on will vary. Usually after a couple of hours the strips are removed and the wearer rinses their mouth. These are available at any drug store and you can start using them right away.

A lot of toothpastes contain sodium bicarbonate which helps with teeth whitening. Some people take baking soda and mix it with a little bit of water and brush their teeth with it and within a week or two you should start to notice a difference. Simple and inexpensive.

Another method for teeth whitening at home is using peroxide. After you brush your teeth rinse and swish the peroxide.

If you have sensitive teeth or gums and you start to feel uncomfortable with any of these methods you should either cut back or stop using all together.

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