

Teeth Whitening

What's Up with Whitening?

Popular, safe, and effective, teeth whitening has given patients across the world a reason to smile. Your appearance can affect you socially, emotionally, and even in business successes. People who smile with confidence are viewed as warm, inviting, and beautiful. Now, with professional whitening systems, Dr. Arima can help you achieve the pearly whites of magazine models and movie stars.

Why Teeth Discolor

Chemicals in foods, beverages, and tobacco can change the color of your teeth, as can the effects of aging. Medications such as tetracycline, excessive fluoride, and previous dental work may also cause unsightly stains on your tooth enamel. Genetics can also affect the color of your teeth. While we think of tooth enamel as white, the natural, unstained shade of your teeth can range from pearly white to bluish gray to pale yellow. Even if you brush and floss daily, stains can tarnish your beautiful smile and steal the confident image you want to convey.

Whitening Options

You don't have to live with discolored teeth. After a thorough examination, we can recommend one the best option for whitening and brightening your smile.

In-office Whitening

In-office whitening is one of the safest and quickest ways to safely whiten your teeth. During this process, we will place a protective rubber dam around your gums and apply a solution of 15 to 35 percent carbamide peroxide, a chemical found in most bleaching products, to your teeth. Depending on the whitening method, Dr. Arima may also use a laser or special lamp to speed up the bleaching process. In-office whitening can give you dazzlingly white teeth in less than an hour.

At-home Whitening

If you'd prefer not to whiten at the office, we can create clear, customized bleaching trays for you to whiten at home. The professional-grade, at-home whitening solution usually contains 10 percent carbamide peroxide. Simply pour the solution into your custom mouth trays and wear them for an hour a day. You will notice whiter teeth almost immediately, but the most dramatic results will appear after one to two weeks of daily treatments.

Over-the-counter Whitening

You can also purchase home-use whiteners over the counter. While there are so many on the market, most of these products are not as effective as the bleaching methods available in our office. If you prefer to use a store-bought whitening system, ask us which product would work best for you. We want you to have a smile you will be proud of, so we're happy to help. Use over-the-counter products as directed, and never use whiteners for more than the recommended time period.

Whitening Toothpastes

If your teeth are sensitive to bleaching, Dr. Arima may recommend a dentifrice (whitening toothpaste). These contain chemical or polishing agents to gently remove stains from the surface of your teeth. While your teeth won't be as white as if you used a bleaching system, whitening toothpaste is safe, easy to use, and can be purchased over the counter.

After Whitening

With all whitening systems, we advise patients not to eat or drink foods that stain, or to smoke, since recently-whitened teeth absorb stains. Whitening systems can also cause increased sensitivity in your teeth and gums. These side effects pass with time, but if they persist or other problems arise, you should contact Dr. Arima immediately.

Whitening Alternatives

If bleaching and whitening can't get your teeth as white as you'd like, veneers or bonding may be a good solution. These cosmetic procedures are long lasting and do not discolor or stain. In addition to whitening your smile, veneers and bonding can cover cracks, chips, and slight misalignments.