

You can smile like a star

Stars such as Jude Law, Julia Roberts, Tom Cruise and Martine McCutcheon all have their dentists to thank for their dazzling smiles. In National Smile Week, we ask six writers to give their verdicts on the latest whitening techniques

THE trend for bright Hollywood smiles has crossed the Atlantic, with more than 100,000 people in Britain trying tooth whitening treatments last year. How well teeth respond varies from person to person and it doesn't work on crowns or veneers.

"Power bleaching treatments and the hydrogen peroxide gels are proven to be safe," says John O'Maoleoin, spokesperson for the British Dental Association. "They won't strip your teeth of enamel and, provided they are used professionally, won't damage your gums."

ENLIGHTEN

How does it work?

A gel which contains 35 per cent liquid hydrogen peroxide is applied to the teeth for three 10 minute bouts. Because this gel is hydrophobic, all the gums need for protection is a constant spray of water. The whitening process is speeded up using a Zenon halogen light. Enlighten's director Payman Langroudi says this is used because its low-level heat control helps protect teeth.

How long does it take?

An hour. Then you wear home bleaching trays, containing four per cent hydrogen peroxide, for 20 minutes a day for five days.

What was the result?

I was told my teeth had lightened by eight shades. The only sensation during the treatment was a slight throbbing but no pain. I was even given a portable CD to listen to. Teeth will stay white for two or three years, depending on lifestyle.

How much does it cost?

Prices start at £450. For details of your local surgery, ring 0800 019 0235 or e-mail info@enlightensmiles.com The treatment by Dr Peter Mendelsohn, 31 Carnaby Street London W1F 7DL, costs £650. Tel: 020 7734 6421.

Overall score: 10/10.

SHEILA MOLLOY

BOOTS SAME DAY TOOTH WHITENING

How does it work?

After your lips and tongue have been pinned back with a retractor, your gums are painted with a protective barrier. A gel containing 38 per cent hydrogen peroxide is then applied for 40 minutes. There was some sensitivity during the procedure and for a few hours afterwards I felt sharp pains in my teeth and gums. Teeth can be lightened further using moulded trays of 10 per cent carbamide peroxide (equivalent to three per cent hydrogen peroxide) gel. You're advised to wear them overnight for four to seven days.

How long does it take?

After an oral assessment, the

same day whitening takes an hour and a half. For trays, you need a 15-minute appointment to have moulds of your teeth made.

Result?

My teeth had whitened by four shades but the trays will make them even whiter. It should last 18 months to two years.

What does it cost?

The oral assessment is £49.50 and the whitening £395. Take home trays cost £395. For more information, call 0645 120 3000.

Overall score: 8/10

EMMA JUSTICE

POWER WHITENING

How does it work?

Your mouth is propped open and gums are protected with a hardening liquid before the gel, containing 35 per cent hydrogen peroxide, is painted on to your teeth. This treatment uses light, which is passed over your teeth three times, and the warmth speeds up the reaction. Optional trays, worn for 30 to 60 minutes twice a day, use 9.5 per cent hydrogen peroxide.

How long does it take?

Just 20 to 30 minutes. You are advised not to eat or drink for an hour after the procedure and are not allowed anything that could stain for at least 24 hours.

What was the result?

Dazzling. It lightened my teeth by six shades and the trays have had a startling effect. But be warned, the results, which should last two to three years, do not come without pain for the

Picture: RETNA



GLITTERING EXAMPLE: Tom Cruise's Hollywood-style grin

first few days. One trick is to wear trays filled with Sensodyne toothpaste for 30 to 60 minutes before swapping to gel.

How much does it cost?

Power whitening costs £645, plus from £110 for the trays, at the Teeth for Life Clinic, 2 Devonshire Place, London W1G 6HL, telephone 020 7935 7511.

Overall score: 9/10.

LUCY MILLER

WITESSE

How does it work?

smilestudio is the UK's first



dedicated teeth whitening spa where pre-treatment nerves are soothed by a massage chair and the promise of a manicure or facial. During the treatment, an orange light is pointed at your teeth after they've been smeared in bleaching gel. Teeth moulds are taken from which two plastic trays are made for the take-home procedure.

How long does it take?

You get three 10-minute blasts of light, although the treatment takes an hour. You must also fill the trays with gel and wear them for half an hour twice a day for 15 days.

What was the result?

It was extremely painful after 10 minutes and the treatment had to be stopped. I'm told this rarely happens but I don't consider my teeth more sensitive than average. The pain lasted about 36 hours. The trays are painless, although they make teeth sensitive.

The results, however, are amazing. The initial treatment made my teeth a couple of shades lighter but they became whiter every day with the trays. The results last around five years, although top-up treatments are available.

How much does it cost?

Vitesse, including the follow-up trays, is £349. Contact smilestudio, First Floor, Wingate House, 93-107 Shaftesbury Avenue, London W1D 8BT, telephone 020 7439 0688.

Overall score: 7/10.

LORNA FRAME

Britesmile

How does it work?

Bleaching gel, containing 15 per cent hydrogen peroxide, is applied to the teeth after the gums have been totally covered with cotton wool and resin. The gel is activated by a blue spectrum light which is gentler than an ultra-violet light or laser.

How long does it take?

Three consecutive treatments of 20 minutes. The real challenge is the next 24 hours when only

white or clear food and liquids are permitted.

What was the result?

There was no pain but after an hour with my mouth open, my jaw muscles ached. It was, however, worth it. My teeth were eight shades whiter – a noticeable difference. Later, when brushing, my gums were very sensitive but this faded after 24 hours. The results should last for two years.

How much does it cost?

The treatment costs £495. Contact BriteSmile on 0800 0768768/www.britesmile.com for details of treatment centres.

Overall score: 9/10.

CLARE NEAL

COMBINATION FUSION WHITENING TECHNIQUE

How does it work?

This treatment does not use a laser or light to activate the bleach and is supposed to be pain free. Instead, the gel, containing 38 per cent hydrogen peroxide, is applied to the teeth for 15 to 25 minutes.

How long does it take?

Half an hour in total. The treatment is continued over 14 days by wearing custom-made bleaching trays for an hour every day, filled with a gel containing 15 per cent bleach.

What was the result?

After the initial treatment, my teeth looked much whiter than before and continued to whiten over the next 48 hours. However, almost immediately, my gums became overly sensitive and this continued for nearly 24 hours. It was very uncomfortable.

After the initial treatment and tray wear, it's recommended you top up with an hour-long tray session every six months.

How much does it cost?

The initial treatment costs £1,100. Take-home trays and gel cost £190 and a replacement box of bleach costs £90. Contact Dr Anthony Newbury 020 7580 3168 or visit www.londonismiles.com

Overall score: 6/10.

DEBBI MARCO

FULL BEAM:

Clockwise from left, Julia Roberts, Martine McCutcheon and Jude Law have all discovered the benefits of teeth whitening treatments; now they can face the cameras without worrying about revealing their flaws under the unforgiving glare of publicity

Picture: DAVE BENETT



Picture: TIM CLARKE

