



Ask Dr. Grant



DR GRANT IS A RENOWNED COSMETIC DENTIST AND THE ONLY ONE IN THE REGION TO HAVE BEEN GRANTED PRACTISING PRIVILEGES, AT A LOCAL PRESTIGIOUS PRIVATE HOSPITAL. YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Teeth whitening - what's the real story?

What are my choices? There are various systems available, each offering slightly different results, with a range of prices that reflect this. Some are carried out by the dentist, others by you at home. But you get what you pay for!

Any examples?

The Zoom system is carried out in the dental chair, while the 'tray' or 'overnight' system is used at home. With zoom, a special gel is applied and then controlled UV light is directed at the teeth, speeding up the whitening process. You get immediate results as the treatment takes less than an hour. It's frequently used on 'extreme makeover' television shows.

With the 'tray' system, customised trays are made. At home, you simply put the special gel in the trays and wear them overnight for about 10 nights. This system is usually cheaper than Zoom, however it does take longer, as the special gel isn't as strong as that used with Zoom. You can go for the two systems in conjunction for even better results: Zoom first and then the trays for three to four nights. The trays can also be used to 'top up', with no need to return to the dentist.

Will it hurt?

Both systems are minimally invasive. You may get some sensitivity after treatment with both the Zoom and 'tray' systems, but this will generally go within 24 hours.

Will it damage my teeth?

No. There has been extensive research which suggests that, microscopically, there is no damage to the tooth surface if carried out properly by a dentist.

Will I look like Simon Cowell?

It's very difficult to go that white, as his teeth are veneers! Whitened natural teeth

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still have the characteristics that keep them from looking false. However, the level of whitening still needs to be controlled, as some complexions suit a very white tooth while others don't.

How much does it cost?

Prices range from £100 to £1000 confused? My advice is to visit someone you trust. Does the treatment come with a guarantee? Who is providing the treatment? Did they come recommended?

What's your final advice?

Remember: results can be as varied as the cost. Go for trust over cost! Always ask your dentist before making up your mind, as some tooth abnormalities can look worse after whitening. And why ask your dentist? Well, you wouldn't visit a vet to get your feet done! **DL**

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