



The writer visited Pitt Street Dental. A Philips Zoom treatment costs about \$1000. Prices may vary. To find a dentist offering the treatment, call 1800 621 448.

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We've got two Philips Zoom whitening treatments to give away. To enter, go to [bodyandsoul.com.au](http://bodyandsoul.com.au) and tell us in 25 words or less why you would like a brighter, whiter smile.

## TEETH

Can you really buy a beaming smile? By Kelly Chuculba

I've always hankered after a pearlier set of pearly whites. My teeth are far from hillbilly yellow, but anytime I saw someone with a lovely set of white chompers I felt a twinge of jealousy.

So I decided to get mine whitened with the Philips Zoom Light-Activated Whitening System, a dentist-only treatment which uses LED whitening technology and claims to whiten teeth up to eight shades in just 45 minutes. If you've ever seen the TV show *Extreme Makeover*, you'll know of this system.

As I type this, fresh from the dentist's chair, I'm whimpering slightly. Pings of nerve-related pain keep zinging from my mouth, but I'm told this will pass – and already I've had a couple of comments about how nice they look. I'm willing the next 48 hours to pass quickly, as that's when the sensitivity wears off, and I'm madly applying the pain gel I was given at the end of the treatment.

The treatment itself was relatively pain-free. I had moulds taken of my teeth (for later at-home whitening) and then my dentist put a rubber ring around my lips to expose the teeth.

Bits of cotton were placed strategically around my mouth, and then my gums were coated in a thick substance in order to protect them from the gel that

was to go on my teeth.

Said gel was dotted on and the activating blue light fit into the space created by the rubber ring. I then lay there for 15 minutes while the blue light did its job.

After the first 15-minute session, the gel was gently removed and a fresh coat reapplied. A further 15 minutes followed, then the remove and replace. By this time, I was feeling pretty relaxed. I'd had no pain and actually started to drift off a couple of times, thanks to the dentist dimming the lights.

Midway through the third 15-minute cycle, I got my first zing. It felt as though someone had touched a nerve in my tooth, or I'd just bitten a piece of foil. If you have fillings and you're unfortunate enough to have done this, you'll know what I mean.

It made me instantly ill, but as quickly as it came it disappeared and was bearable. If you've got sensitive teeth, don't panic; Zoom has different intensity settings.

I relaxed back into my semi slumber before a final zing sent my eyes wide open, but just in time, too – my cycle was up. After rinsing out the gel, I was handed a mirror to check out my new pearly whites. Just as promised, they were shades lighter and I was aware how much more confident I suddenly felt about my smile.

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### *The results*

And 48 hours later? I won't lie: that first evening was slightly painful. There was an ache in my teeth, interspersed with zings of pain, and it took heavy painkillers to even dull it. Several times in the night I was aware of it, but by the next morning, the pain was gone. It hasn't come back since.

My teeth seem even brighter two days after and I've had several more comments on how lovely they look. I'm eagerly awaiting the arrival of my mouth guards, so I can top up as required.