

your TEETH

THE LATEST COSMETIC DENTAL PROCEDURES
CAN DELIVER THE SMILE YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED

Whitening

1. Zoom3! Advanced Power Teeth Whitening

WHAT IS IT? An in-chair whitening system that lightens teeth by up to 13 shades.

WHAT'S INVOLVED? A pH-balanced whitening gel is applied to teeth and activated for 15 minutes using UV light. This is repeated three to five times, depending on the patient's sensitivity. A five-minute fluoride treatment completes the procedure.

IS IT PAINFUL? "There is sensitivity," explains Dr Mark Gadeley from Pitt Street Dental Centre in Sydney. "This can be lessened with anti-inflammatory medicine before treatment and overnight."

RESULTS: Teeth appear up to 13 shades lighter, and further whitening can be achieved using an at-home gel and mould. Results last as long as lifestyle permits – smokers and those who frequently enjoy coffee, tea or red wine will not experience the same long-lasting results.

COST: Between \$800 and \$1000.

2. BriteSmile

WHAT IS IT? A 90-minute in-chair brightening system that boasts low sensitivity.

WHAT'S INVOLVED? The teeth and gums are isolated and a patented whitening gel is applied. Plasma Arc light activates the gel for 20 minutes at a time. "This is repeated up to four times, depending on staining and how the teeth respond," explains Dr Sandra Short of DentArtistry in Sydney.

IS IT PAINFUL? "Expect less sensitivity than with other in-chair procedures," says Short.

RESULTS: "These are immediate and excellent, and last as lifestyle permits."

COST: Approximately \$1200.

3. PelactivBRIGHT

WHAT IS IT? An in-salon, self-administered whitening system.

WHAT'S INVOLVED? Carbamide peroxide gel is activated for 20 minutes by a cool LED light, which breaks it down into oxygen and water to oxidise stains.

IS IT PAINFUL? Because of a precise formulation of carbamide peroxide, results are achievable without extreme sensitivity.

RESULTS: Teeth can be brightened by

up to eight shades. A PelactivBRIGHT pen can be used within 24 hours to further brighten.

COST: \$179 for salon treatment; \$49 for PelactivBRIGHT pen.

Tooth replacement

1. All Ceramic Crowns

WHAT IS IT? Zirconium-based ceramics are used to mend broken teeth, repair a large amount of decay, or replace worn-out fillings.

WHAT IS INVOLVED? The crown length, shape and size are assessed as the mouth and lips move to ensure ideal results. The crown is then fitted to the tooth.

IS IT PAINFUL? "No," says Short.

"There should be no downtime as good provisional crowns can be made, which means the patient and the dentist can assess them for functions like speech, smiling and chewing, before the permanent crown is fitted."

RESULTS: Expect natural results, with no gum line shadow as was associated with the underlying metal in the old metal/ceramic crowns. The crown is stronger, generally able to resist



stress fracture and lasts up to 10 years.
COST: Approximately \$2500 per tooth.

2. Bridge Technology

WHAT IS IT? A false tooth is placed between two porcelain crowns to fill the area left by a missing tooth or teeth. It is suitable where two or more teeth in a row are missing.

HOW DOES IT WORK? It uses stronger zirconium ceramic as an underlying support framework for the bridge.

“We also use egg-shaped false teeth, which can be protruded into the gum to give a more realistic appearance,” says Short. “The tooth looks like it is coming through the gum, rather than lying on top of it.”

The procedure is similar to ceramic crowns, however, a small surgical

procedure is sometimes required to allow the artificial tooth to emerge through the gum.

IS IT PAINFUL? There may be some minimal discomfort.

RESULTS: Last up to 10 years. Metal is no longer used, so there is no gum line shadow.

COST: A three-unit bridge is approximately \$5600 to \$8000.

3. All-On-Four

WHAT IS IT? An immediate placement of implants combined with extraction of teeth for all upper or all lower teeth.

WHAT'S INVOLVED? “Only four implants are used,” explains Short. “We use two in the front and one on each side at the back. They are angled to take advantage of the best bone and the

bridge on those implants within one week. You have to be missing the entire teeth in the bottom or top, which we see frequently in smokers or people with gum infections.”

DOES IT HURT? There is little pain and downtime, although “we restrict the kinds of foods people can eat for six months”, says Short.

RESULTS: “One week after initial surgery, the patient will have a full set of teeth again. This is the perfect solution for someone who has lost all of their teeth – they don’t have to wait up to six months for implants and it costs about half as much.”

COST: Approximately \$30,000 for either top or bottom arch.

4. Dental Implants

WHAT IS IT? Prosthetic tooth forms are placed in the jawbone so that they are accepted by the body and embedded in the bone. They can then support crowns and bridges.

HOW DOES IT WORK? “Recent developments in the implant surface enhance biological tissue repair, which means that bone grows quicker and in more abundance onto the implant,” explains Short. “This speeds healing and allows shorter implants to be placed in less bone. In the same way, different surface treatments can be designed to enhance the soft tissue seal over the implant, which helps to prevent infection where the implant enters the mouth.”

Virtual technology is also employed to ensure the best results. “We plan the surgery with cone beam scans or CAT scans and 3D computerised software,” says Short. “This allows virtual surgery and precise surgical guides. It makes failure less likely as the surgeon, dentist and laboratory technicians are able to collaborate to reach the best outcome.” ▶



IS IT PAINFUL? There is very little pain and downtime.

RESULTS: “Once integrated, implants will usually last for more than 20 years.”

COST: Upwards of \$6000 per tooth.

5. Porcelain Veneers

WHAT IS IT? Bonded porcelain overlays are used to replace stained or discoloured teeth.

WHAT’S INVOLVED? “Porcelain veneers can cover heavily stained teeth and are also used to close gaps in front teeth, to change the shape of teeth or rebuild broken-down teeth,” says Short.

A diagnostic wax-up and provisionals are employed to let both the patient and dentist see the end result before it is made. Unwanted enamel of the tooth is removed to allow remodelling of the tooth and ensure best results.

RESULTS: Today’s porcelains are translucent, opalescent and can mask dark stained teeth with improved strength. Results last up to 10 years.

COST: From \$1500 to \$2200 per tooth.

Tooth straightening

1. Tooth Coloured or Clear Braces

WHAT IS IT? Ceramic or acrylic braces that are almost invisible.

HOW DOES IT WORK? Exactly like normal braces, with regular adjustments according to the movement of the teeth.

IS IT PAINFUL? “Orthodontic treatment is always uncomfortable for a few days following adjustment,” explains Short.

RESULTS: Treatment time varies, however, patients can expect a perfect smile that should be permanent.

COST: From \$7000 to \$10,000.

2. Lingual or Invisible Braces

WHAT IS IT? Braces are fitted on the inside of the teeth.

HOW DOES IT WORK? Similar to normal braces.

IS IT PAINFUL? “Pain is the same as with metal braces,” says Short. “They are flat and quite comfortable after an initial adjustment. It may take two weeks for speech to adjust as the positioning could interfere with tongue movement.”

RESULTS: Treatment time is the same as for other braces and varies according to the individual. Patients can expect straight teeth after treatment is complete.

COST: Ranges from \$10,000 to \$15,000.

3. Invisalign

WHAT IS IT? A series of thin, clear plastic trays move teeth into alignment.

HOW DOES IT WORK? Each tray is designed to move teeth a fraction. After five to 35 trays have been used

(depending on the movement necessary), teeth are straighter.

IS IT PAINFUL? It’s similar to normal braces.

RESULTS: Invisalign is very effective for moderate straightening.

COST: Between \$10,000 and \$15,000.

4. Accelerated Osteogenic Orthodontics

WHAT IS IT? Orthodontic treatment combined with gum surgery to accelerate tooth-straightening.

HOW DOES IT WORK? Gum surgery is performed prior to fitting the braces. Gums are lifted and bones scored. Synthetic bone material and antibiotics are placed around the teeth to be moved. The gums are then sutured back into place. “The trauma stimulates an inflammatory response and activates bone remodelling, allowing for rapid tooth movement,” explains Short. “Normal orthodontic adjustments are made every two weeks to keep the process active.”

IS IT PAINFUL? Surgery is performed under general anaesthetic or sedation and has a two-day recovery. The orthodontics are no more painful than normal orthodontic treatment.

RESULTS: Permanent results can be accomplished in three to eight months, depending on case difficulty.

COST: From \$10,000 to \$15,000.