Teeth Whitening Melbourne: In-Chair and Take-Home | Core Dental

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/cosmetic/teeth-whitening/

Details:

At Core Dental we offer in-chair Zoom whitening and dentist-supervised take-home whitening with custom trays. A dentist examines your teeth first to check that whitening suits you, explains the benefits, risks and alternatives, and gives you a written quote before treatment starts. Results vary, and we cannot guarantee a particular shade change. Book online or call us on 13 13 16.

Which whitening options do we offer?

We offer two dentist-supervised options, so you can choose the approach that fits your teeth, your timetable and your budget.

In-chair whitening, described in our whitening information as Philips Zoom! WhiteSpeed. Please confirm the system in use at your chosen practice when you book.

Take-home whitening with custom-fitted trays and a product supplied by your dentist, who explains how often and for how long to use it.

An examination helps establish the cause of discolouration and whether whitening is appropriate for you. For a closer comparison, read our article on the difference between in-chair whitening and take-home whitening kits .

How does in-chair whitening work?

Your dentist explains the proposed procedure, the expected benefits, the risks and the alternatives before the appointment begins. Our in-chair whitening information describes an appointment of about 90 minutes. Your own appointment length and any preparation depend on your assessment and treatment plan, so please confirm these when you book.

How does take-home whitening work?

We make custom trays for your teeth and supply the whitening product with written instructions. Follow those instructions closely, and contact us if you notice any problems. Our Carrum Downs team notes that take-home kits show results in about 2 to 3 weeks, although this varies from person to person.

Who is suitable for whitening, and who is not?

Not everyone is suitable. Before treatment we recommend an assessment for:

tooth sensitivity

decay

gum disease

existing restorations such as fillings, crowns and veneers

Fillings, crowns and veneers do not change colour with whitening, which may leave a colour mismatch with your natural teeth. Discolouration can relate to diet, smoking, ageing, medicines or changes inside a tooth, and the cause affects which options may be suitable.

What are the risks and limits of whitening?

Tooth sensitivity and gum irritation can occur. Your dentist should explain the risks that apply to your teeth, the proposed product and the application method, and what to do if symptoms occur. Professional supervision does not make whitening suitable for everyone, and some risks always remain. You can read more in our article on the risks involved with teeth whitening .

How much whiter can your teeth become, and how long do results last?

The amount of whitening depends on the cause of discolouration, the starting shade and your individual response. We cannot promise a particular number of shades, and your dentist can discuss realistic expectations after examining your teeth. How long results last varies, so please discuss maintenance and any repeat treatment with your dentist rather than relying on a fixed duration. Our article on how long teeth whitening lasts explains the general factors.

How much does whitening cost, and how can you pay?

We quote before treatment starts and you can ask for an itemised estimate and the current payment options before you proceed. As published in September 2026, our new patient packages included a check-up, clean and Zoom whitening for $750, and a check-up, clean and take-home whitening for $650. These figures were published as at September 2026 and can change, so please confirm the current price and what it includes before booking.

We offer interest-free payment plans through Payright for amounts up to $20,000 over 3 to 30 months with fortnightly instalments. Eligibility applies: you must be 18 or over, an Australian permanent resident, and able to provide ID and a verifiable email and mobile. Approval is not guaranteed. HICAPS claiming is available on-site, and any rebate depends on your own health fund cover. See our dental payment plans page for terms.

Where can you have teeth whitening at Core Dental?

Whitening is offered across our Melbourne practices, including Southbank , South Melbourne , Caroline Springs , Carrum Downs , Berwick and Glenferrie . Call 13 13 16 to confirm whitening availability at your preferred practice and whether a check-up or other preparation is needed first.

Who provides whitening at Core Dental?

Our general dentists assess, plan and supervise whitening, with support from our dental hygienists and nursing team. You can meet our clinicians on our dentists and registered specialists page.

What actually causes teeth to discolour?

Understanding the cause matters more than it sounds, because it determines whether whitening will work at all.

Teeth can become stained or discoloured through consumption of dark, staining food and drink, such as berries, coffee and red wine, through smoking, or through the use of certain prescription medications. Dentists divide the result into two kinds of staining, and they respond very differently to treatment.

Extrinsic staining

Extrinsic staining is staining confined to the enamel, and it is most commonly caused by age, diet and poor oral hygiene. As we age, tooth enamel can thin and start to reveal the yellow dentine beneath. Diet and oral hygiene also play a part, especially where a diet is high in sugars and acidic food and good oral hygiene is not maintained. Teeth whitening treatment is most effective in removing this kind of staining.

Intrinsic staining

Intrinsic staining is discolouration of the inner structure of the tooth, and it can be the result of trauma. That might be an impact to the tooth in childhood, such as a fall that damaged the developing permanent tooth, or trauma that involved internal bleeding, which discoloured the permanent tooth. Intrinsic staining usually requires additional dental treatment to achieve whitening, which is why an examination comes before any discussion of shades.

Given these different causes, it is important to have your dentist thoroughly assess your dental health to determine whether teeth whitening will be an effective treatment for you at all.

What happens before whitening begins?

Two things, and skipping either tends to show in the result.

First, an examination. Your dentist assesses the cause of the discolouration, the condition of your teeth and gums and the restorations you already have, and explains whether whitening is likely to help. Second, a clean. Before any whitening process we recommend that patients have their teeth cleaned by a hygienist to remove plaque build-up, because whitening gel works on the tooth surface and anything sitting on that surface gets in the way.

What are the steps in an in-chair appointment?

In-chair whitening is the faster of our two options, taking about 90 minutes, and there are three stages to it.

A brief check-up, to confirm that in-chair whitening is appropriate for your teeth on the day.

Protection of your gums, followed by application of the whitening gel to the teeth.

Activation of the gel with a blue LED lamp, which produces the whitening effect.

The aim is to remove or reduce staining and discolouration. How much change you see depends on the cause of the discolouration and your individual response, which is why we do not quote a shade figure in advance.

How are take-home trays made, and how do you use them?

Take-home whitening is the more affordable option and it gives you control over the degree of whitening.

We take a mould of your teeth and build custom trays, one each for the upper and lower arches. You then routinely apply the whitening gel to your teeth via the trays until you have achieved the result you want, following the written instructions supplied with the product. We use the Pola Day and Pola Night whitening systems.

Two practical advantages follow from this. You decide how far to take the whitening rather than committing to a single appointment, and you keep the trays, so the process can be repeated if the effect wears off over time.

Why do results differ so much between people?

Because teeth differ, and whitening works on what is actually there rather than on a target shade.

Whitening works by breaking down the discolouration so that the teeth look whiter, and each method has a different degree of effectiveness and permanency. The results will not be the same for everyone, because everyone's teeth are different. Some people find they can achieve a whiteness several shades brighter than their existing tooth colour, while others may achieve only one to two shades of change.

Your dentist will advise you on the degree of whitening and the process that is best suited to your teeth and more likely to give you the results you are seeking. That conversation happens after the examination, not before it.

What side effects can whitening cause, and who is most at risk?

Teeth whitening is generally safe when used in the correct way. The risks are real but mostly predictable, and knowing which group you fall into is the point of being assessed first.

Because a bleaching agent is involved, side effects can include damage to the gums, tooth sensitivity and irritation, and possibly bleeding in the oesophagus and stomach if the bleach is swallowed. Gum irritation arises from contact between the whitening agent and the gums, which is why the gums are protected before an in-chair application and why trays are custom-made rather than generic.

People with receding gums, cracks in their teeth, or failing restorations that can leak are the most likely to experience sensitivity. If any of those apply to you, we would normally address them before whitening rather than alongside it.

One of the biggest risks arises when whitening is applied incorrectly or by someone who is not properly qualified.

What can a dentist do that an over-the-counter kit cannot?

Three things, and together they are the reason whitening is treated as a dental procedure rather than a cosmetic purchase.

Dentists can use higher concentrations of the active whitening agents than are available over the counter, and they have the equipment to apply and activate them under supervision. They use shade guides and photography to document whitening outcomes, so the change is recorded rather than estimated from memory. And their understanding of how whitening behaves on different teeth and restorations reduces the likelihood of side effects or complications.

Supervision does not make whitening suitable for everyone. It does mean that if something does go wrong, the person who started the treatment is the person who can address it.

What does Australian law allow in a whitening product?

The difference between a whitening product you can buy yourself and one a dentist must supply is not marketing. It is a legal threshold, written into the Poisons Standard and carried into the poisons legislation of every state and territory.

The Australian Dental Association sets out where the line falls. The Poisons Standard "recognises hydrogen peroxide 3-6% and carbamide peroxide 9-18% as Schedule 5 substances requiring 'Caution', meaning that teeth whitening products containing up to these concentrations can be sold direct to consumers if they are labelled with stipulated safety warnings." Below those concentrations, in other words, a product is a consumer good with warnings on the label.

Above them, the position changes completely. Schedule 10 of the Poisons Standard "lists substances of such danger to health as to warrant prohibition of their sale, supply and use other than in specified exempt circumstances", and the ADA notes that "Schedule 10 specifically states that teeth whitening products containing more than 6% hydrogen peroxide or 18% carbamide peroxide may only be sold, supplied and used by registered dental practitioners as part of their dental practise. These provisions are formalised in all state and territory poisons legislation."

Two details make this easier to apply when you are reading a label or a price list.

The two chemicals are related. Many products use carbamide peroxide rather than hydrogen peroxide, and the ADA explains that "one-third of its concentration being equivalent to hydrogen peroxide, e.g., 18% carbamide peroxide approximates 6% hydrogen peroxide." That is why the two thresholds sit at 6% hydrogen peroxide and 18% carbamide peroxide rather than at a single figure.

The range in real use is very wide. The ADA records that effective concentrations run "as low as 3-6% for some products supplied to patients for home use to 35% in some office-based bleaching products." A dentist-supplied take-home kit and an in-chair treatment are not the same chemistry at different prices.

Source: Australian Dental Association, Policy Statement 2.2.8, ada.org.au (last reviewed September 2025; accessed 3 November 2026).

Why does it matter who supplies the product?

Because the assessment matters as much as the gel, and the threshold above exists for a reason.

The ADA's position is that whitening "should only be performed if the treatment can be justified, and after a comprehensive dental examination has been conducted by a Dental Practitioner." The examination is what establishes whether bleaching is appropriate for your particular teeth and gums at all, and what the realistic result is. On side effects, the ADA reports that "the most common side-effects are transient tooth sensitivity and soft tissue irritation during or immediately following treatment". Hydrogen peroxide is not benign at concentration: direct exposure "of the skin, eyes and mucous membranes to hydrogen peroxide may cause severe irritation or burns."

The ADA is also direct about where whitening is now sold. It observes that services "are now also increasingly offered by unregulated, unqualified non dental practitioners in settings such as beauty and hair salons, shopping mall kiosks, dedicated teeth whitening salons, or via mobile services that travel to a location convenient to the consumer", and that many such services "claim that their practitioners are 'teeth whitening specialists'". Its answer to that claim is a question of competence, not of territory: "only registered dental practitioners have the expertise to assess whether bleaching is safe for individual patients, to recommend the most appropriate technique and materials, and to provide treatment that meets regulated safety and quality standards of care."

There is a related caution about repeat use. The ADA notes that marketing of consumer products "encourages unrealistic expectations about whitening results and promotes regular ongoing use to maintain desired effects", and that this "is a concern given the lack of clinical data supporting frequent home use of such products over long periods". If you intend to keep topping up a result indefinitely, that is worth discussing with a dentist rather than assuming it is harmless.

What rules apply to whitening lights and lasers in Victoria?

This is the part most people are unaware of, and it is specific to where you live.

Lights and lasers used alongside whitening fall under a safety standard. The ADA cites "AS/NZS 4173:2018, Safe use of lasers and intense light sources in health care", which "specifies requirements for dental practices and the cosmetics industry, including required standards of training." The reason for the standard is physical rather than theoretical: the ADA warns that incorrect application of heat or energy, "such as light from a plasma arc lamp or high-power (Class 4) laser may cause nerve damage to the tooth and burns to adjacent soft tissues, and failure to ensure use of the appropriate protective eyewear may also cause irreversible injury."

On top of the standard, some states add a licence. The ADA states that all registered dental practitioners with appropriate training and competence may undertake procedures using Class 4 lasers, "but Western Australian, Queensland, Victorian, and Tasmania legislation requires that practitioners in these states first obtain a licence to do so from the appropriate state regulatory authority."

Victoria is on that list. For a Melbourne patient, that means a Class 4 laser procedure involves a state licensing requirement in addition to the practitioner's registration — a reasonable thing to ask about if a laser is proposed as part of your treatment.

The Dental Board has also published guidance to practitioners in this area. The ADA records that in August 2021 the Board published "Guidance for registered dental practitioners: Using and supplying teeth whitening products", which cites the Poisons Standard, Therapeutic Goods Administration advertising requirements and Australian Consumer Law, and states that "You can only use teeth whitening products in line with your training and the law".

Frequently asked questions

Can anyone have teeth whitening?

No. We recommend an assessment for sensitivity, decay, gum disease and existing restorations before treatment. Existing fillings, crowns and veneers do not change colour, so your dentist will explain what to expect for your teeth.

Why have whitening supervised by a dentist?

A dentist can assess suitability, discuss realistic results, identify dental problems that need attention first and explain the risks and alternatives. You can read more in our article on why to see a dentist for teeth whitening .

Is there a take-home option?

Yes. We offer dentist-supervised take-home whitening using custom trays. Your dentist supplies instructions for the product and explains how often and how long to use it. Follow those instructions and seek advice if problems occur.

How long does an in-chair appointment take?

Our in-chair whitening information describes an appointment of about 90 minutes. Your appointment length and any preparation depend on your assessment and treatment plan, so confirm these when you book.

Are payment options available?

Yes. We quote before treatment starts and offer interest-free Payright plans, subject to eligibility and approval. Ask for an itemised estimate and the current payment options before you proceed.

Will whitening work on intrinsic staining?

Usually not on its own. Intrinsic staining affects the inner structure of the tooth, often following childhood trauma or internal bleeding within the tooth, and it generally requires additional dental treatment rather than surface whitening. Whitening is most effective on extrinsic staining, which is confined to the enamel.

Should I have a clean before whitening?

We recommend it. Having your teeth cleaned by a hygienist first removes plaque build-up, and because whitening gel acts on the tooth surface, anything sitting on that surface works against the result.

Can I repeat take-home whitening later?

Yes. You keep the custom trays, so the process can be repeated if the effect wears off over time. Ask your dentist how often is reasonable for your teeth before you start, since repeating it too frequently can contribute to sensitivity.

Who is most likely to get sensitivity from whitening?

People with receding gums, cracks in their teeth, or failing restorations that can leak. If any of those apply, we would normally deal with them before whitening rather than at the same time.

What concentration can I legally buy for myself?

Under the Poisons Standard as described by the Australian Dental Association, products up to 6% hydrogen peroxide or 18% carbamide peroxide are Schedule 5 substances requiring a "Caution" label, and may be sold directly to consumers if they carry the stipulated safety warnings. Products above those concentrations fall under Schedule 10 and may only be sold, supplied and used by registered dental practitioners as part of their practice.

Is a whitening service in a salon or kiosk subject to the same rules?

The concentration limits apply to the product regardless of the setting, and the ADA notes that services are increasingly offered in salons, shopping mall kiosks and mobile services by people who are not dental practitioners. The ADA's position is that only registered dental practitioners have the expertise to assess whether bleaching is safe for an individual patient. If you are considering a non-dental service, the concentration being used and who is legally permitted to supply it are fair questions to ask.

Why would a laser need a separate licence?

Because Victoria is one of the states that requires it. The ADA states that registered dental practitioners with appropriate training may use Class 4 lasers, but that Victorian legislation — along with Western Australian, Queensland and Tasmanian legislation — requires practitioners to obtain a licence from the appropriate state regulatory authority first. The underlying safety standard is AS/NZS 4173:2018, which covers training requirements for both dental practices and the cosmetics industry.

Why are the two peroxide thresholds different numbers?

Because the chemicals differ in strength. The ADA explains that carbamide peroxide is roughly one third as strong as hydrogen peroxide, so 18% carbamide peroxide approximates 6% hydrogen peroxide. The two thresholds describe the same practical limit expressed in two different compounds.

Does whitening need an examination first?

The ADA's position is that whitening should only be performed where the treatment can be justified and after a comprehensive dental examination by a dental practitioner. The examination is what determines whether bleaching suits your teeth and gums, and what result is realistically available, before any product is applied.

Related services and further reading

Cosmetic dentistry

All about teeth whitening

In-chair and take-home whitening compared

Risks involved with teeth whitening

Is charcoal whitening safe?

Composite and porcelain veneers

Dental crowns

Dental hygiene

Dental payment plans

Understanding your treatment

Core Dental at a glance

Nine Core Dental clinics across Melbourne: Southbank, South Melbourne, Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Epping, Wyndham, Berwick, Bayside and Glenferrie.

Open six days a week, with Monday to Friday hours to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings.

We quote before treatment starts and offer interest-free payment plans.

In-chair and dentist-supervised take-home whitening options.

Contact Core Dental

Phone	13 13 16
Booking	Online through coredental.com.au, or call 13 13 16
Hours	Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday 8.00am to 1.30pm (Bayside Saturday 8.30am to 1.30pm), Sunday closed
Clinics	Find your nearest practice

Results, recovery times and potential risks vary for each individual. This information is general in nature and is intended for people over 18. Seek advice from a qualified, AHPRA-registered practitioner before proceeding.

What teeth whitening service does Core Dental offer?

We offer in-chair Zoom whitening and dentist-supervised take-home whitening with custom trays at our Melbourne practices. A dentist assesses suitability first, and results vary. Call 13 13 16 or book online through coredental.com.au.

How much whiter can teeth become with Core Dental whitening?

The result depends on the cause of discolouration, the starting shade and your individual response. We cannot promise a particular number of shades. Your Core Dental dentist can discuss realistic expectations after examining your teeth.

How long is an in-chair whitening appointment at Core Dental?

Our in-chair whitening information describes an appointment of about 90 minutes. At Core Dental your appointment length and any preparation depend on your assessment and treatment plan, so please confirm them when you book.

Which whitening system does Core Dental describe for in-chair treatment?

Our in-chair whitening information describes Philips Zoom! WhiteSpeed. We ask patients to confirm the system available at their chosen Core Dental practice, and your dentist explains the procedure, benefits, risks and alternatives.

What can stop teeth whitening from working evenly?

Fillings, crowns and veneers do not change colour with whitening, which may leave a mismatch. Core Dental dentists also check for sensitivity, decay and gum disease first, because the cause of discolouration affects which options suit you.

What did Core Dental whitening packages cost in September 2026?

As published in September 2026, a check-up, clean and Zoom whitening was $750 and a check-up, clean and take-home whitening was $650 at Core Dental. Prices can change, so confirm the current price and inclusions before booking.

Does Core Dental offer payment plans for whitening?

Yes. We quote before treatment starts and offer interest-free Payright plans up to $20,000 over 3 to 30 months, subject to eligibility and approval. HICAPS claiming is available on-site at Core Dental clinics.

Where can I book teeth whitening at Core Dental?

Core Dental offers whitening at practices including Southbank, South Melbourne, Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Berwick and Glenferrie. Call 13 13 16 or book online to confirm availability at your preferred practice.