Post in-surgery whitening: What next?

Chris Dodd
Managing Director of Purity Laboratories, discusses how to maintain the new, white smile after professional in-surgery whitening.

New research by the British Dental Health Foundation (1) found that one in five people now spend more money per month on oral care products, compared with hair products, skincare, fragrances and cosmetics. And, having seen a huge increase in the demand of teeth whitening over the past decade, it’s clear that the quest for a “Hollywood smile” is unlikely to end any time soon!

The ability to offer a professional tooth whitening service in your practice is an extremely attractive and lucrative treatment offering which will keep you at the cutting edge of cosmetic dentistry. In just one surgery visit, you can give your patients a brighter shade through treatment with bleaching trays, strips or laser treatment. However, whilst we spend our time educating and encouraging patients to stop smoking after whitening treatment, reduce the intake of coffee and staving foods, brush teeth twice daily and cut down on sugary snacks, the truth is that once the patient leaves the practice the maintenance of their new, white smile becomes their own responsibility.

The lows…
Patients are keen to minimise the effect of “bounce back”; a process whereby the teeth rehydrate and slightly darken a day or two after treatment. Enamel is naturally subject to abrasion but even more so after in-surgery treatment; because Hydrogen Peroxide and Carbamide Peroxide reduce the hardness of the enamel. Therefore, it is even more important that patients avoid highly abrasive whitening toothpastes as they can damage the teeth and gums, removing the lustre of the teeth and dulling a beautiful smile. By recommending a low abrasion whitening toothpaste, you can ensure your patients protect and restore the enamel calcification lost as a result of the bleaching process, helping maintain their white smile for longer.

The abrasiveness of toothpaste is measured according to the BDA (relative dentin abrasivity) value, and any value over 100 is considered to be “abrasive”, something which is unfortunately often not included in the marketing or promotional information supplied with toothpaste products, thus masking a common problem.

Interestingly, a USA-based independent testing laboratory (July 2012) tested the abrasion levels of 15 toothpastes. The results confirmed that Beverly Hills Formula’s whitening toothpaste is less abrasive than other leading brands of both whitening and regular toothpastes. In fact, Beverly Hills Formula Perfect White scored as low as 95 on the Abrasiveness Index Table, whilst some leading competitors displayed levels as high as 158.

And the highs…
To support these abrasion results, an invitro laboratory study found that Beverly Hills Formula whitening toothpastes remove stains in just one minute. Beverly Hills Formula Perfect White (coded as “PLMO/1x1158 HILLS Formula Perfect White Stain Removal” in the study) toothpaste proved effective at removing stains with almost 91% of stains removed over a five-minute period and Beverly Hills Formula Dentists’ Choice Gum & Whitening Expert toothpaste removing almost 90% of stains. Meanwhile, other leading brands of whitening toothpastes and toothpolishes scored as low as 41%, a remarkably low percentage, considering water alone removes 48% of staining (2).

These results signal a break-through in oral care and aesthetics, as this new generation of whitening toothpaste offers a tooth-friendly solution post in-surgery treatment, helping patients restore their teeth to a natural white colour for longer.

Whitening - no longer a sensitive issue
After in-surgery tooth whitening treatment patients can experience sensitivity, this can be anything from a mild twinge to having severe discomfort that can last for several hours, or even days. For these patients, why not recommend the use of a toothpaste that contains Potassium Citrate. This desensitising agent relieves tooth sensitivity by effectively blocking the transmission of pain sensation between the nerve cells that enable cold and hot sensations to reach the tooth’s nerves. Those who require extra sensitivity relief alongside an extra whitening boost will appreciate the benefits toothpastes like Perfect White Sensitive. Combining the advanced Hydrated Silica for high performance whitening with Potassium Citrate for rapid sensitivity, patients can start to enjoy acidic foods and drinks once again whilst keeping tooth looking and feeling brighter. Regular use will also help to prevent tartar build-up and relieve tooth sensitivity, effectively protecting and whitening teeth whilst allowing patients to maintain good oral care.

The bright side of whitening
As patient safety, protection and awareness of tooth whitening remains a prime concern for you and your team, it’s essential to promote a consistent oral health message. Communicating the importance of good at-home oral care routines, through the use of whitening toothpastes after in-surgery whitening treatments, will help patients maintain a white smile and a healthy mouth for longer.

References
1. Research conducted on behalf of the British Dental Health Foundation by Atominik Research, February 2015. Sample size: 2,044.