

Smiles Better

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A spot of bother!

Have you ever noticed how sometimes peoples front teeth have areas of white enamel on them, we call these white spots lesions. These are generally areas of demineralised enamel, i.e. weak enamel.

Why does this happen?

The main reason for demineralisation is decay. These white spots are seen most commonly in people who've had orthodontic brackets (train tracks).

Cleaning is more difficult are these bands and if a good diet and oral hygiene routine is not adhered to these areas around the bracket start to demineralise. Patients usually only really notice it once the brackets have been removed.

White spots lesions can occur on newly erupted teeth which is usually due to the enamel not forming properly. Possibly the mother was sick during pregnancy or the child may have fallen when they were little and knocked their baby tooth which can then cause damage to the unerupted developing tooth.

In the case of demineralisation from decay the outer layer of enamel is penetrated by the bacteria in plaque and cause minerals to be taken out the enamel making it porous and causing the colour to change. If caught in time enamel can be re-mineralised and hardens but the white spot may still remain.

So how can we get rid of these white spots?

First we would try to re-mineralised

the lesion using fluoride toothpastes, varnish or tooth mousse. With all dentistry we want to try to preserve as much tooth structure as possible, so the last resort in restoring these lesions is to remove the weak enamel and place a composite (white) filling or a porcelain veneer. In some cases simple Tooth Whitening can hide camouflage the white spots as the surrounding tooth structure become whiter.

At Causeway Dental we have a new treatment called Icon (Infiltration concept), which we are having great success with when it comes to removing these white spots lesion. The Icon system is a minimally invasive treatment that aims to fill the porous white spot area with a resin and therefore strengthen the tooth structure and restoring its

aesthetics. It requires no injections or drilling and so is patient and tooth friendly!

For more information have a look at the Icon webpage or http://www.youtube.com/icon_treatment_vestibular. For a consultation call our reception team a call 02827663808

Tips for prevention of white spot lesions:

Brush twice daily with a fluoride toothpaste, don't rinse with water after brushing. If wearing braces you need to be very careful with your diet, limited sugar intake and avoid fizzy, sugary drinks!

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