

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Meeting Van Haywood, world expert in tooth whitening and sensitivity

When it became known that Professor Van Haywood would be in Dublin addressing dentists on the subject of tooth whitening and dentine hypersensitivity, Nicola Kramer made sure readers of *Irish Dentist* would get to know all about how he works

Van B Haywood, DMD, is Professor in the Department of Oral Rehabilitation, School of Dentistry at the Medical College of Georgia. He is a member of numerous organisations, including the American Dental Association, the International Association of Dental Research and the American Academy of Restorative Dentistry. In 1989, he co-authored the first publication in the world on nightguard vital bleaching (at-home tray bleaching using 10% carbamide peroxide) with Dr Harald Heymann, which formally introduced the technique to the profession

How did you get involved with GlaxoSmithKline?

We published the first article in the world on treating sensitivity from bleaching with potassium nitrate [Leonard RH, Haywood VB, Phillips C (1997) Risk factors for developing tooth sensitivity and gingival irritation in nightguard vital bleaching. *Quintessence Int* 28: 527-534], and then GlaxoSmithKline brought out Sensodyne, which is an ideal desensitiser.

So using Sensodyne is effective in eliminating after-bleaching sensitivity?

Yes, using Sensodyne in a bleaching tray for 30 minutes is all it takes. Brushing with any desensitising toothpaste takes two to three weeks to be really effective; this is a 10 to 30 minute application and with brushing you only brush for maybe a minute. Patients use it whenever their teeth hurts, until the pain goes away. That's why we say 10 to 30 minutes. Some people take it out after 15,

some after 20. When using the bleaching concept of tray delivery, Sensodyne is particularly good as it has potassium nitrate, which is the one we did the research on, and it doesn't have SLS, which is the stuff that gives you the cold feeling and can cause gingival irritation. So use a toothpaste that has potassium nitrate, no SLS and has fluoride, and that's a



Professor Van Haywood at the GSK event held last month

great combination for sensitivity and strengthening teeth without causing other problems.

How do you ascertain a patient's potential sensitivity to bleaching?

That's partly what the examination is for. If you scratch on their teeth with a

'Diagnose the needs of the patient, diagnose the concerns of the patient and prescribe the treatment that will work'

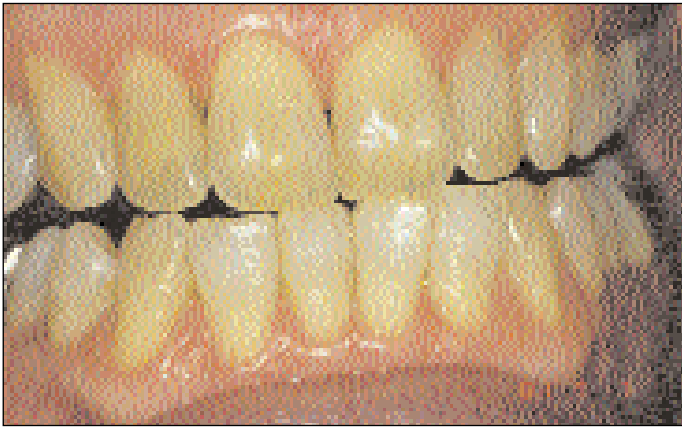
little explorer you'll see the kind of response you get. Ask questions like: 'Do you drink Coke with ice?' or 'Can you bite into ice cream?'. They usually know if they have a history of sensitivity. They can tell you their concerns and you can evaluate them objectively and make a decision as to what would be best. You can ease them in, start them on desensitising

toothpaste only, for a week or two. You can work out a protocol that works well for them to get round their sensitivity.

What is your opinion on power bleaching?

All the research papers will tell you it takes about 3 visits to achieve the kind of outcome you can achieve with tray bleaching. So it's about 3 or 4 times the cost for the same outcome. So I can't really justify it on a cost-benefit basis for the patient and for the convenience for the dentist, because it is a very demanding procedure to isolate the patient's teeth so you don't burn the patient or yourself, and it takes one-and-a-half to two hours of chair time so it's just very expensive. For some patients you can get it done in one treatment but most need three-and-a-half and it may be four-and-a-half, so that means when the patient starts they're never going to know how much it's going to cost them and you don't know what to tell them as there's no way you can predict how many visits will be needed. I only do power bleaching if the patient demands it and has the money to pay for it and doesn't want to do the tray bleaching. You get a better, more cost-effective, safer, and more long-lasting result if you do it with the tray.

Most dentists expect to see a result within two weeks with the tray bleaching. Why is it that so many dentists believe that after those two weeks it's not worth carrying on, although



Average tooth discolouration will lighten in two weeks or less but some discolouration requires more time



Single arch treatment provides the patient with a continuous comparison

research has show it obviously is?

Well, because the manufacturers tell you that it's going to work in two weeks and that's because the original safety data that was set up specified the shortest amount of time you could take to get shade change was about two weeks, so is has kind of become a norm. It is also a good selling point but in actuality the first article we wrote said it takes 2 to 6 weeks because although a lot of folks will take 2 or 3 days to see a change, or 2 weeks, there are some folks that will take 3, 4, 5, 6 weeks. Some of the research that other people have done shows you get most of your colour change in 2 weeks but that isn't the case for everyone. So the safest thing is to tell someone that it will take 2 to 6 weeks. If it happens sooner they're happy, if it doesn't work they're not discouraged.

How often do you bring a patient into the surgery to see how they're getting along?

I just tell them not to call me unless they run out of material, have a problem or their teeth have got to the colour they want them to be.

Do you have patients who want to go that bit too far with the bleaching and you have to tell them to stop?

I tell them what will look

good on them, just like when you go to a make-up counter and someone will tell you what will be the best colour for your complexion. With teeth, basically they should match the whites of your eyes; that looks very natural. If your teeth get whiter than that, it looks fake, and if they're not quite that white it looks like you need your teeth whitened. So from a photogenic standpoint the goal I give them is that if we match the white of their eyes, they'll actually look the best. Some people like it to go further, just like some people want to be bleach blonde and for them that's good but you can't promise that their teeth will be that white because some people's teeth get very, very white whereas others just get paler. So not everybody can achieve that 'glow in the dark' look anyway so it's best to give them realistic expectations and then they go into it with their eyes open.

Do you have any problems with patients suffering from body dysmorphic disorder?

Some people can't tell that there has been a colour change, so I take photos of their teeth at the start, including a shade guide in the picture. The other thing I do is bleach one arch at a time so they can compare the top and bottom teeth. Sometimes it's slow, like losing weight or going grey, so you don't realise


it's happening until someone you haven't seen for a while comments on the change.

How do you feel about the veneers versus bleaching issue?

The best dentistry you can do is to do no dentistry. Because you're not going to beat the teeth that God made unless they're malformed. So I try to do the most conservative thing. If I try bleaching first and it works then I don't need veneers. And if it's not successful then I know the next stage is composite bonding or veneers, so to me it's a logical progression. But once you do a restoration it's not going to last forever, so once you're into that restorative cycle you can't stop. Each restoration takes more of the tooth away, so the

goal would always be to be as conservative as possible.

What is the average length of time before a patient starts to see deterioration of their whitened teeth?

The more staining things they do, the more the teeth stain up. The average length is 1 to 3 years where you don't have to do anything, and we have some as long as 10 years. We just published out 10-year recall on the first group of patients and about 40% of them still felt like their teeth were still the same colour. Now that may not be the case but as far as they were concerned their teeth looked the same. As long as they're happy with their smile and they feel good, that's great. 

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Professor Haywood will be speaking, together with Dr Linda Greenwall, at the Independent Seminars bleaching event of 2004 - 'What's new in tooth whitening?' - in London. They will be lecturing on whitening products, techniques, tips and guidelines on Friday 23 April and holding a hands-on day on Saturday 24 April, which will involve different bleaching techniques and products, including power bleaching and making up home bleaching trays - the dentists can actually carry out the whitening techniques on each other! To book your place please call Independent Seminars on 00 44 1923 851777 or email seminars@fmc.co.uk