



Jim Strickland Investigates Teeth Whitening

May 8, 2006

ATLANTA -- Mary Ann Hughes of Forest Park wanted to breathe life into her dead tooth.

Enter the Internet, and a pop up offer for a product with the promising name: White Overnite.

"It said \$3.95, free trial and if you like it, you got 14 days to say yeah or nay," she said.

\$3.95 on her debit card would cover the shipping. Instead of a trail size, Hughes received full supply, and an invoice. "So I opened that and there was a charge for \$106.90."

"Whats your reaction when you read that?"

"I'd like to had a heart attack," Hughes recalled.

She got her "free" sample the next day.

There was a catch in the fine print. Anyone ordering the free treatment, instantly agreed to pay for a shipment of the product every 60 days. They'd have to call to cancel or the whitener and charges would keep coming.

Marijane Runk wanted whiter teeth for her wedding. Now she wants a divorce from White Overnite.

"The company said that it was in the terms and conditions. You can cancel but there is no refund, even if I send the product back," Runk lamented.

White Overnite is owned by two brothers from Southern California. Joey and Johnny Gioeli used to be rock musicians in Los Angeles.

Joey Gioeli uttered an expletive as the brothers locked the door to their office, refusing repeated requests for a formal interview.

The Los Angeles Better Business Bureau has given White Overnight an “F” rating. Complaints are pouring in at the rate of 100 per month.

“The reality is what this company's real purpose is to separate people from their money, said BBB President Bill Mitchell.

“Doesn't matter what the reason is, the answer is ‘no,’ they're not refunding any money,” said Mitchell.

“With so many people wanting white teeth, it's easy to see a lot of products and companies popping up all over,” said Dr. Debra Gray King, president of the Atlanta Center for Cosmetic Dentistry.

“The thing that you have to be careful about as a consumer is that you may not be getting as good a deal as you think.”

White Overnight claims to be made with 35% carbamide peroxide. Lab tests conducted for Channel 2 Action news revealed the product contains only 13% of the bleaching agent. The tests, run by the leading manufacturer of whitening gel, were repeated three times. The testing lab at Discus Dental, had never heard of White Overnight.

The company also claims its product is approved by the Food and Drug Administration. An FDA spokesperson told us no teeth whitening product has won the agency's approval, as they are still deciding whether the products require FDA approval.

The Gioelis insisted both the claims about the FDA sanction and the percentage of bleaching agent are accurate.

I tried White Overnight for six applications, following the directions as best I could. Dr. King found no change in the color of my teeth.