

**DENTISTRY**

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## DENTISTRY FAQs

### CHOOSING A COSMETIC DENTIST

Today more than ever, the choice of a cosmetic dentist is a critical decision that should be made with the utmost care. So how do you choose a cosmetic dentist? After all, in today's marketplace, many general dentists perform at least some types of cosmetic dental procedures.

Over the past few years, there has been a dramatic influx of 'cosmetic dentists' into the field so much so that in the industry, being a 'cosmetic dentist' is almost a cliché... passé! Why? Because these days, any general dentist who does things as simple as whitening teeth can claim to be a cosmetic dentist. So when someone is looking to get a Hollywood smile, what should they expect? Are all dentists the same?

Choosing the right cosmetic dentist for you, one with substantial experience in complex cases, extensive hands-on training, and a gentle approach that compliments your needs and wants is critical to achieving the most successful outcome - your gorgeous new smile.

Selecting a cosmetic dentist can be a difficult and confusing process. In the end, it is a personal decision and we suggest that liking the dentist is a key element. We can, however, offer some advice, which our guests have found helpful during the selection process. TAKE YOUR TIME.

Most cosmetic dental procedures are elective procedures, not emergencies. Time spent learning about the dental procedures, different techniques and materials, and cosmetic dentists you are considering will pay great dividends in terms of your understanding and emotional comfort later.

If in doubt, see a couple different accredited cosmetic dentists for a consultation. This will clarify in your own mind those personal characteristics that you would like your cosmetic dentists to have. We are always happy to provide second opinions.

### POST GRADUATE COSMETIC DENTAL TRAINING

To perform cosmetic dental procedures at the highest level; technical skill, an artistic eye, and a rigorous program of post-graduate training in cosmetic dentistry is needed. It may surprise you to learn that the vast majority of dental schools don't teach any courses in cosmetic dentistry.

For the few that do, they are usually limited to only a few introductory courses. Your mouth is not the place for on-the-job training. Therefore, it is crucial that the cosmetic dentist that you select continually completes series of hands-on courses in cosmetic dentistry.

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The field changes rapidly and it is vital to keep abreast of current techniques. In depth training is essential to learn the latest techniques and materials to get optimal results. The significance lies not only in developing the dentist's clinical judgment and technical skill, but also in demonstrating his/her commitment to practicing cosmetic dentistry at the highest level of excellence.

### PROFESSIONAL COSMETIC DENTISTRY CREDENTIALS

In dentistry as in medicine, specialties exist that indicate a higher level of education, knowledge, and expertise in particular areas of focus. Presently, however, there is not recognized specialty in cosmetic dentistry.

We recommend that cosmetic dentists should be a member of the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (AACD) and British Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (BACD). They represent the largest international dental organisations dedicated specifically to the art and science of cosmetic dentistry and they administer accreditation programs for cosmetic dentistry.

The accreditation process is a rigorous program, which requires dentists to attend a number of continuing education courses in cosmetic dentistry, be tested, and submit a number of cosmetic cases to be judged by a panel of cosmetic dentistry experts.

Our Clinical Director, Dr Uchenna Okoye is on the Accreditation Board for BACD

### A CARING APPROACH & GREAT COMMUNICATION

Find a doctor with a good chairside manner who conveys to you that they care about you as a person as well as a client. Cosmetic dentistry is a process not a single operation. Find someone with whom you can talk easily. It is just as important that he/she understands what you desire as that you understand what they are describing.

To accomplish these goals, the first thing the cosmetic dentist should do is listen and make sure they understand all your concerns, needs and desires as they relate to your dental health and the look of your smile. Only then should they spend time diagnosing and consulting on the recommended treatment plan, which should be individualized for each client.

### AN ARTISTIC EYE

While technical virtuosity is necessary to produce a great clinical result, it is not sufficient. Excellent cosmetic dentistry demands a highly sophisticated artistic sense.

In order to achieve an optimal aesthetic result, one must have a clear vision of what is artistically possible and appropriate. In this regard, it helps greatly if the cosmetic dentist works closely with the master ceramist, talking with them about the desired aesthetic results.

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### SMILE DESIGN EXPERIENCE

Before you randomly select a dentist out of the phone book or rely on your long-time family dentist to give you the smile design of your dreams, think again. Great cosmetic dentistry is an art. The fact is, many dentists are generalists who simply have not performed cosmetic smile designs very many times or with a regularity that leads to mastery of this art. So, if you are considering veneers, for example, you should ask exactly how many veneers the dentist has placed.

Make sure you review the portfolio of the work actually carried out by the cosmetic dentist. Beware that there are commercially available photos and albums that show the possibilities for cosmetic dentistry. But you want to confirm that you are seeing actual work of the dentist you are considering and make sure that the 'before' photos you look at are also cases similar to yours.

### THE ENVIRONMENT

How does the practice look, feel, even smell. The care and attention placed in the facilities will reflect their care of you. How friendly are the staff, do they anticipate your needs, is it a happy environment? These are some of the tangible factors that can help you assess how the team may take care of you!

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## COSMETIC DENTISTRY

### **Q: Do you perform general dentistry or only cosmetic dentistry?**

A: Our primary focus is on comprehensive oral health care, so we look after all aspects of your dental care. We carry out cosmetic dental procedures such as porcelain veneers, crowns, bridges, inlays, onlays, and whitening.

We also perform general dental procedures including hygienic cleanings, fillings, etc. The difference is that we practice dentistry with the aesthetics of the final result in mind, so we place a special emphasis on making you look great.

### **Q: I would like my smile improved, but I am simply fearful of going to the dentist. Can you do anything to make me feel better?**

A: Our principal dentist Dr. Uchenna Okoye is terrified of dentists! This means we work hard to cater for guests like her and make sure it is a great experience every time! Our practice uses new, more effective types of anesthetic to numb the teeth than in earlier years, we even use a gel to numb the gum first before injecting so it is painless.

We have many amenities designed to distract you from the dental procedure and to help you with the psychological discomfort you may associate with visiting a dentist. From the selection of DVD movies, music CDs, anti-anxiety medication (when appropriate), and our in-house massage therapist, you will feel very relaxed with us

### **Q: What are porcelain veneers?**

A: These are also called "porcelain laminates," "porcelain laminate veneers," and just "veneers," "Veneers are thin sculpted pieces of tooth-shaped porcelain that fit over the front of the teeth and are the premier standard of care in cosmetic dentistry. Permanently bonded to the front surface of a tooth, they can improve the position, shape tooth colour and they can make a dramatic, immediate difference to one's smile and overall facial appearance.

Veneers are wonderful for fixing common problems such as midline spaces (the gap-toothed look of the two front upper teeth) or chipped, crooked, missing, discolored, pitted, malformed or improperly positioned teeth. Once only accessible to the wealthy and top Hollywood stars and models, veneers are now a popular way for many people to obtain the smile of their dreams.

### **Q: What is a crown?**

A: A crown is a restoration that covers, or "caps," a tooth to restore it to its normal shape and size, strengthening and improving the appearance of a tooth. Crowns are necessary when a tooth is generally broken down and fillings won't solve the problem. If a tooth is cracked a crown holds the tooth together to seal the cracks so the damage doesn't get worse.

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Crowns are also used to support a large filling when there isn't enough of the tooth remaining, attach a bridge, protect weak teeth from fracturing, restore fractured teeth, or cover badly shaped or discolored teeth.

**Q: How do I choose a cosmetic dentist?**

A: For the best results, it is important to know the qualifications and experience of the treating cosmetic dentist. The term "cosmetic dentistry" has become trendy and many dentists are promoting themselves as cosmetic dentists. At this time, cosmetic dentistry is not a recognised specialty (like orthodontics, for example).

However, it is a discipline of dentistry that requires a thorough knowledge of science and an artistic eye. Ask your cosmetic dentist about his or her training, credentials, and experience in this area. A very effective way to understand your dentist's skills is asking to see their portfolio of photographs. Dentists who are dedicated to the art of cosmetic dentistry always take photographs of their cases.

Ask which organisations the dentist belongs to. Dentists that are members of AACD (American Academy of Cosmetic Dentist) and BACD (British Academy of Cosmetic Dentists) have to fulfil certain criteria and hours of continuing education to become a member.

**Q: Is there a standard beautiful smile for all people?**

A: No. Each person is different and each case is different, and has to be planned very carefully. There are many differences between male and female teeth and between all people. The design of the teeth has to be in proportion with the gum line, the lips, and the construction of the face of each individual to achieve a beautiful and natural smile.

At London Smiling each smile we create is unique to that individual, that is the artistic excellence of a great cosmetic dentist.

**Q: How white should I get my teeth?**

A: In adolescence we generally have a white, bright smile but over the years our teeth pick up stains and become discolored. When undergoing cosmetic dental procedures the question then is how pearly white do we want to make your teeth? Many people are choosing shades that are whiter than in years past. We like a natural look and use the colour of the whites of your eyes as the starting point.

**Q: Are you more expensive than other cosmetic dentists?**

A: Our fees are comparable to those at premier dental practices nationally. If you are price shopping for dental care, bear this in mind - just like all restaurants, cars, or hotel rooms are not the same and you would never purchase one because it was the cheapest one you could find, all dental practices are not alike.

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With such a high level of artistry, technology, and science needed for optimal results, you can be confident you have chosen the right place. We encourage you to experience what separates us from other dental practices. We are confident you will be delighted with our services.

**Q: Will my dental insurance cover cosmetic dental treatment?**

A: Like plastic surgery, insurance does not usually cover treatment done for purely cosmetic reasons. However, treatment that is needed to repair broken or decayed teeth, or to replace existing restorations that are defective will usually qualify for dental insurance.

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## VENEERS

### **Q: What are porcelain veneers?**

A: Veneers are thin sculpted formed porcelain facings that are used to create a new front surface to a tooth. They are permanently bonded to the front surface of a tooth, to restore or improve position, shape and tooth colour; they can make a dramatic, immediate difference to one's smile and overall facial appearance.

Veneers are wonderful for fixing common problems such as midline spaces (the gap-toothed look of the two front upper teeth) or chipped, crooked, missing, discolored, pitted, malformed or improperly positioned teeth. Once only accessible to the wealthy and top Hollywood stars and models, veneers are now a popular way for many people to obtain the smile of their dreams.

### **Q: Is there really a difference between the porcelain veneers you can get from one cosmetic dental practice to another?**

A: Yes, there is a real blend of art and science behind high-end aesthetic dentistry. All veneers are not created equal. Our cosmetic dentists have extensive training in the art of smile design, which determines the colors, line angles, shapes, thickness, translucency, occlusion, and many other factors that is discussed with our master technicians. Our laboratory then hand makes the veneers to our specifications.

Veneers should be custom-designed to fit your face, smile, gender and personality. Done correctly, they look and feel like real teeth. You can be as much a part of the selection process as you wish, but part of why you select a cosmetic dentist is his or her experience and artistry in what looks great. Computer imaging as well as before and after photos of other cases will help you decide on the style, shape and color that work best for you.

### **Q: How are porcelain veneers made?**

A: Veneers are made from a thin shell of porcelain and are permanently bonded to the teeth. Our selected, world-class dental ceramists fabricate the veneers from the impressions (moulds) we take of your teeth and color mapping specifications. Each veneer is custom-designed to fit naturally and comfortably over each tooth like a glove. After placement, these veneers are designed to look like beautiful, natural teeth.

### **Q: What are porcelain veneers used for?**

A: Veneers can be used to correct the size, shape, color and alignment of teeth. So if your smile suffers from teeth that are stained, crooked or malformed for any reason (cracks, chips, fractures, spaces, smoking or tetracycline stains, etc.), then you may be a great candidate for porcelain veneers.

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Many people want straighter teeth without the hassle and time orthodontic braces require. Now teeth can be straightened with porcelain veneers and crowns. Most people can get the shape, length and degree of whiteness they want, and they don't stain! But what many people don't realize is that the shape of veneers in combination with occlusal adjustments, such as opening the bite, can also have profound impact on the entire face.

This can result in giving the appearance of a face-lift or elimination of wrinkles without any plastic surgery. So in developing your personalized Smile Design, we take into account building out certain teeth or reduce others to achieve such desired objectives. This is why for a number of our guests, they actually look at least 10 years younger after our Smile Designs!

**Q: What's the difference between plastic veneers, bonding and porcelain veneers?**

A: Composite bonding (also sometimes called "direct veneers" or "plastic veneers") is a tooth-colored plastic resin material. Bonding can usually be placed in one visit and is used many times to repair a smaller chip in a tooth or to make aesthetic improvements in more than one tooth. Bonding usually requires little to no tooth reduction or anesthesia.

Because they are made out of porcelain in a lab, porcelain veneers are usually more aesthetic in terms of the spectrum of colors, realism and translucency.

Porcelain veneers are also more of a long-term solution than bonding, as they do not stain, discolor and are stronger than bonding. Porcelain veneers usually require only a couple of office visits - the first visit to prepare the teeth and the second to seat the veneers.

**Q: How quick can porcelain veneers give me a gorgeous smile?**

A: Our guests can usually get the smile of their dreams in a couple of visits. At the first veneer appointment, your teeth are prepared, impressions are taken, and you will walk out of the office with custom temporary veneers.

In the second appointment, we permanently seat the veneers. Imagine getting a new smile within one month - one that actually fits your face and personality and gives you the confidence to express the real you!

**Q: What are the pros and cons of braces vs. veneers?**

A: Braces are most desirable for people under the age of 18. At this stage in life, the bone is more malleable, teeth move easier and are more likely to stay once the bone "remodels" around the newly positioned teeth.

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Many adults also wear braces, but for a longer duration and almost always need a permanent retainer to hold the new positioning. The most mature guest we recently advised to have braces was 76 and she had a great result!

We may advise a combination of braces and veneers depending on the severity of your problem. Orthodontic braces do not require the teeth to be reshaped or restructured in any way. Sometimes called, "instant ortho," veneers can give the appearance of straightening teeth, closing gaps, and changing the shape of teeth to give a perfect smile.

A veneer is a thin shell of porcelain. After the enamel on teeth are reduced, usually only slightly, the veneers are bonded in place covering the visible part of a tooth. Seated correctly, they are strong and should last a very long time. The bite is most often enhanced and veneers do not stain or discolour.

**Q: How are the teeth prepared for porcelain veneers?**

A: Unlike crowns, usually only a thin layer of enamel is removed from the teeth to make room for the veneers. Usually, only about 5/10 to 8/10 of a millimeter is removed from the outer surface. This small amount of reduction is required to make room for the porcelain.

This allows us to make the veneers to the proper contour without them appearing to be bulky or unnatural. Some teeth on some individuals may not need any tooth reduction, and some may require a lot.

**Q: How are porcelain veneers placed on the teeth?**

A: New advances in bonding technology allow us to create an extremely strong bond between your teeth and the veneers. The teeth are first prepared with a bonding adhesive and special resin cement is used as the "glue." The resin cement is available in a number of different colors to give the best possible aesthetic result.

After approval, resins are then used to permanently bond the veneers to the teeth using a special dental curing light, which helps to create a stronger, longer-lasting bond between the veneer and your tooth. The durability, look and simplicity of application make it easy to see why veneers have become one of the most popular cosmetic dental treatments available today.

**Q: How many porcelain veneers are needed for a new Smile Design?**

A: This depends entirely on the desired result. If there is only one tooth that is discolored or malformed, then a single veneer may be able to be used.

To get a more balanced and even looking result, many times it is recommended that several veneers (from 4 to 8) be done at the same time. This allows us to get the most beautiful result possible. When closing large gaps between teeth, 6 to 10 veneers may be necessary to get a proper aesthetic result.

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**Q: How long will porcelain veneers last?**

A: There are no hard and fast rules about how long porcelain veneers will last. While you can certainly expect your veneers to last many years (some patients have had them for 20 or more years), it is unrealistic to expect them to last forever. With good home care and by exercising good judgment, it seems likely that a porcelain veneer could last well in excess of 10 to 15 years.

**Q: Will my teeth be sensitive after I get porcelain veneers?**

A: This is unusual but some people experience sensitivity (to hot and cold or pressure, etc.) after the placement of veneers. Some sensitivity is absolutely normal and usually dissipates spontaneously from a day or so to a couple of weeks. The reason for the sensitivity can arise from the amount of enamel left on your tooth after preparation, the proximity of the nerve, as well as several other factors. If this sensitivity remains or concerns you at all, please contact your cosmetic dentist.

**Q: Will I need to change my diet after getting porcelain veneers?**

A: Once placed, your veneers are very strong and will resist most of the forces placed upon them by a normal diet, so a normal diet should pose no problem at all. Porcelain has great crushing strength but poor tensile strength. Therefore, you should avoid anything that will bend or twist the veneers. As with your regular teeth, opening bottle caps with your teeth or crunching on hard candy or ice is not a good idea!

**Q: How do you maintain new porcelain veneers and what follow-up care is recommended?**

A: With proper home care and scheduled dental visits, veneers can provide you with a beautiful smile for many years. A week or two after the placement of your veneers, we ask that you return to us for a cosmetic polish and treatment evaluation.

This visit is extremely important. It gives us the opportunity to evaluate the placement of the veneers, the health of your tissues and to answer any questions you might have regarding your new smile design. For example, if you grind or clench your teeth, please let us know. We can fabricate a soft night guard for you to wear to minimize the stresses placed upon your teeth while you sleep.

The maintenance of your porcelain veneers is relatively simple. Brush and floss as you normally would to prevent oral hygiene problems. Once placed, veneers are typically the kindest restoration to the gum tissues that we currently have available. Don't be afraid that you'll damage your veneers by either flossing or brushing. Any non-abrasive toothpaste is acceptable.

A good home care regimen will help ensure the aesthetic success of your veneers.

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**Q: When would porcelain veneers maybe not be right for me?**

A: If you have unhealthy teeth. Porcelain veneers cannot be placed on teeth where there is decay or active periodontal disease (gum disease). These conditions must be treated by your dentist before porcelain veneers can be successfully fabricated and placed.

If you have weakened teeth. If a significant amount of tooth structure has been lost as a result of decay or fracture, or else already replaced by a dental filling, the tooth may not be a good candidate for a porcelain veneer.

Porcelain veneers do not significantly strengthen the teeth on which they are placed. Teeth that have, or have had, a history of a loss of a significant amount of tooth structure are usually better treated by placing a dental crown on them, not a porcelain veneer.

If you have an inadequate amount of tooth structure. Some teeth, as a result of excessive wear or previous attempts at dental work, may have inadequate tooth structure. These teeth do not make good candidates for porcelain veneers.

If you clench or grind your teeth. Persons who clench and grind their teeth can make poor candidates for porcelain veneers. The forces created by these activities, called bruxism can easily chip or break porcelain veneers. Possibly a person can successfully control their bruxing habits during their waking hours, but during sleep a bruxer has essentially no control over this activity. If a person who bruxes does have veneers placed, they must be committed to wearing a acrylic dental night guard when they sleep to minimize any effects.



## CROWNS

### **Q: What is a crown?**

A: A crown is a restoration that covers, or “caps,” a tooth to restore it to its normal shape and size, strengthening and improving the appearance of a tooth. Crowns are necessary when a tooth is generally broken down and fillings won’t solve the problem.

If a tooth is cracked a crown holds the tooth together to seal the cracks so the damage doesn’t get worse. Crowns are also used to support a large filling when there isn’t enough of the tooth remaining, attach a bridge, protect weak teeth from fracturing, restore fractured teeth, or cover badly shaped or discolored teeth.

### **Q: How does the dentist make a crown?**

A: The tooth is shaped so the crown can fit over it. An impression of the teeth and gums are made and sent off to the laboratory to be custom made.

A temporary crown is fitted over the tooth until the permanent crown is made. On the next visit, the dentist removes the temporary crown and cements the permanent crown onto the tooth.

### **Q: I have seen people with crowns that look “fake” or that have a dark line at the gum line of the crowns. What causes that?**

A: This is usually caused by the metal margin of a porcelain fused to metal (or PFM) crown. In the “old days,” many dentists used PFM crown, but now in most cases, cosmetic dentists use all porcelain crowns, which provide virtually the same strength but are highly superior in their aesthetic result.

### **Q: Why would someone want an all-porcelain crown?**

A: Some restorations are designed with a metal lining, covered with porcelain (porcelain- fused-to-metal or PFM). At one point in time, most restorations were made this way.

When placed, they usually look opaque or “flat” because they do not let light pass through like a natural tooth. There is often a tell-tail dark line next to the gum-line that is undesirable (often the darkness invades the adjacent gum tissue as an adverse reaction). All-porcelain restorations are what we chose to use unless there is a compelling reason otherwise.

Again, when properly seated, they are as strong or stronger than their metal predecessor. And the appearance can be identical to a natural tooth, allowing light to pass through (referred to as translucency).

### **Q: Why would the dentist recommend crowns instead of veneers?**

A: Crowns require more tooth structure removal; hence, they cover more of the tooth than veneers. They are usually indicated for teeth that have sustained significant loss of tooth structure. Crowns may be placed on natural teeth or dental implants.

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**Q: What can be done to replace a missing tooth?**

A: Cosmetic dentistry now offers options beyond having a denture. One option is to have an implant and crown placed. An implant is a titanium cylinder that is placed in the bone (under the tissue) and functions to replace what was once the root of the tooth.

After a period of 5-6 months the crown is placed over the abutment. This tooth is now cared for like all the other teeth in your mouth. Another option is a bridge. A bridge is like a crown that is bonded to the teeth on either side of the missing tooth.

Some people prefer to not go through the surgical procedure of having the implant placed. Others prefer to have a quick fix and to not go through the waiting period of 5-6 months before a crown can be placed on the implant.

**Q: What can I expect on my first visit for the crown procedure?**

A: As soon as you are seated, we will numb the area to be worked on using a local anesthetic. Depending upon the type of local anesthetic used, you can expect to feel numb for one to four hours. If your anesthesia should last longer, do not be concerned. Individuals react differently to anesthesia. While the area is numb, please be careful not to bite your lip or tongue.

You may want to consider a soft diet or no meal at all while until your sensation returns in the affected area. Once the appropriate area is numb, the dentist will prepare the tooth to maximize the function, retention and aesthetics of your new crown.

After the tooth is fully prepared, we proceed to the impression stage where we create a model of your prepared tooth for our technician to custom-fabricate your crown.

**Q: How should I care for my crowns?**

A: To prevent damaging or fracturing the crowns, avoid chewing hard foods, ice or other hard objects - just like you should avoid for your natural teeth.

You also want to avoid teeth grinding. Brushing twice a day, cleaning between your teeth is vital with crowns. Floss and interdental cleaners (specially shaped brushes) are important tools to remove plaque from the crown area where the gum meets the tooth. Plaque in that area can cause dental decay and gum disease. Of course regularly visiting your dentist and hygienist to maintain your mouth.



## DENTAL IMPLANTS

**Q: What is an implant?**

A: A dental implant is a small man-made titanium screw that serves as the replacement for the root portion of a missing natural tooth. The implant is placed in the bone of the upper or lower jaw and allowed to bond with the bone and serve as an anchor for the replacement tooth.

Dental implants can be used to replace a single lost tooth or many missing teeth. Implant supported replacement teeth look, feel and function like natural teeth.

**Q: Who is a candidate for dental implants?**

A: Anyone who is missing one or more of their teeth due to injury, disease, or decay may be a candidate for dental implants. If one, a few or all teeth are missing, dental implants in conjunction with a crown or bridge can replace those teeth. Occasionally, older patients express concern that their age may prevent them from enjoying the benefits that dental implants offer. However, health is more of a determining factor than age. If you're healthy enough to have a tooth extracted, you're probably healthy enough to receive dental implants. Your dentist will determine if you are a candidate for dental implants after a careful evaluation of your dental and medical health history.

**Q: Is there pain or discomfort involved?**

A: Most of our guests report that there is very little discomfort and that they were much more comfortable following the procedure than they anticipated. Modern implants are placed in a very gentle fashion and care is taken to the various tissues involved. We will often introduce you to another guest who has had the procedure so you can have first hand advice!

**Q: How will I benefit from dental implants?**

A: Dental implants offer many benefits never before available for the treatment of missing teeth. They look, feel and function like your real teeth. You will have the ability to chew and enjoy your food, avoiding the embarrassment of loose dentures.

**Q: How long will the treatment take?**

A: Treatment time will vary depending on your unique situation. Nowadays it is often possible to get well functioning and esthetic looking teeth within a few days. In some cases it may be necessary to wait a longer time period before finishing the restoration in order to obtain an optimal result.

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**Q: How much will it cost?**

A: The fee for tooth replacement with dental implants will depend on several factors, including the number of teeth being replaced and the number of implants required to support your replacement teeth. It is important for you to know that you do not necessarily need an implant for each missing root. Some additional procedures may be required prior to the placement of your dental implants to ensure the long-term health of your dental implants.

To obtain a specific fee estimate, it is necessary to have the dentist examine your mouth. After a thorough diagnostic examination, your dentist will recommend the treatment that is best for you and what your investment would be for the procedure.

**Q: Is it important to take care of the implants after the treatment is completed?**

A: Yes! Maintaining care of the implants will help to assure the long-term success of your treatment. You will be responsible for daily plaque removal, which can be accomplished through brushing and flossing around your restoration. Your dentist or hygienist will show you how to properly care for your implants. You must visit your dentist at least once a year for maintenance appointments.

**Q: Are implants a new invention?**

A: Implants are not new to the dental field. Prof. Brånemark started his research in the early 50's and has revolutionised implants as we know them today. There are over fifty years of clinical studies supporting the success and longevity of dental implants.

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## ROOT CANAL THERAPY

### Q: What Is It and Why Do I Need A Root Canal?

A: A badly infected tooth or one that just had significant decay can sometimes be saved through procedures utilized by both the general dentist and the root canal specialist, the endodontist. Extraction is truly our last resort!

### Q: How do I know if I need a root canal?

A: Some indications of the need for root canal treatment may be:

- Spontaneous pain or throbbing while biting.
- Sensitivity to hot and cold foods.
- Severe decay or an injury that creates an abscess (infection) in the bone.

### Q: Why should I spend a lot of money on a root canal? Why not just pull the tooth?

A: Saving the tooth maintains space, keeps other teeth from shifting, and eliminates the need and cost of a bridge or implant and crown. Although seemingly expensive, it is actually quite cost effective. Remember, once your teeth are gone, they're gone!

### Q: How is a root canal performed?

A: A root canal is really not as bad as it is sometimes made out to be and in our practice everyone is amazed at how pain free the procedure can be. Root canal treatment consists of the removal of the infected nerve tissue that lies within the root of the tooth. It is this infected pulp tissue that causes an eventual abscess.

The first step in a root canal is to obtain access to the nerve. This is accomplished by establishing a small access opening in the top of the tooth. It will be done under a local anesthetic. The length of the root canals is determined and the infected pulp is removed.

Usually at the same visit, the canal where the nerve is located will be reshaped and prepared to accept a special root canal filling material. This filling procedure will probably not occur until your next visit. The number of visits necessary to complete your root canal will depend upon several factors including the number of nerves in the tooth, the infected state of the nerve and the complexity of the procedure.

The final step in your root canal will be the sealing of the root canal with a sterile, plastic material, called gutta percha. This is done in order to prevent possible future infection. The tooth will then possibly need a crown once treatment is completed in order to re-establish normal form and function. This decision will be based upon several additional factors. If treated early, root canal therapy need not be uncomfortable.

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Another 'old wives' tale' is that by removing the nerve the tooth becomes 'dead'. This is not true. The tooth is very much alive and functioning because it receives a source of blood supply and nerve supply from the surrounding tissues that hold it in place in your jaw bone. The tooth will have no sense of feeling to hot, cold or sweets but will be responsive to biting pressures etc.

With the proper restoration the tooth should last as long as your other teeth and can even be used as an anchor tooth for a bridge. Sometimes when there has been long-standing infection or abscess, there may be some soreness associated with the first or second root canal visit.

If this should be true, you will be given specific instructions to follow to minimize the discomfort. When an infection is present, it may be necessary to take an antibiotic. If pain should be present, analgesics may need to be prescribed.

## FRESH BREATH CENTRE

### Q: What is halitosis?

A: More than 90 million people suffer from chronic halitosis or bad breath. In most cases it originates from the gums and tongue.

### Q: What causes bad breath?

A: Although there may be a number of causes, most of the time, halitosis originates in the mouth. It is caused by oral bacteria breaking down food debris. This process creates byproducts called volatile sulfur compounds, which emit a smell similar to rotten eggs.

The type of bacteria that initiates this process needs an environment that is free of oxygen, so they usually inhabit areas that are difficult to reach, such as the pockets around teeth and the fissures of the tongue.

In some circumstances, the odor may be caused by a systemic condition such as diabetes or a problem in the sinuses, pharynx, lungs, or stomach. Other debris in your mouth and poor oral hygiene can also cause odor. Therefore, the first step in solving bad breath problems is to undergo a medical examination to ensure that there are not any systemic problems contributing to the condition.

Other factors can also cause halitosis: tobacco, alcohol, mouth rinses containing alcohol, garlic, onions, spicy food, hunger and dry mouth. These are all secondary to the main culprit - oral bacteria. If you have concerns about bad breath, please discuss this with us.

### Q: Can bad breath also come from other causes?

A: Bad breath also may occur in people who have a medical infection, gum disease, diabetes, kidney failure, or a liver malfunction. Xerostomia (dry mouth) and tobacco also contribute to this problem. Cancer patients who undergo radiation therapy may experience dry mouth. Even stress, dieting, snoring, age and hormonal changes can have an effect on your breath.

### Q: What can be done to combat bad breath?

A: If it is clear that bacteria are the culprits, methods to reduce them are the first line of defense. That's why if you have bad breath, you should make sure to obtain a complete dental examination that includes a periodontal examination.

Keeping your mouth as clean as possible helps eliminate bacteria. This 'disinfection' includes thorough brushing, proper use of dental floss, recommended mouth rinses and cleaning the tongue. Our hygienists are skilled at removing all the bacteria and most importantly showing you the skills needed to maintain things at home.

### Q: Do certain food cause bad breath?

A: Very spicy foods, such as onions and garlic, and coffee may be detected on a person's breath for up to 72 hours after

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**SKIN AESTHETICS FAQs**

**BOTOX®**

**Q: What exactly is Botox and how safe is it?**

A: Botox® is the brand name for a bacterial protein - Botulinum Toxin Type-A manufactured by Allergan. When injected into a muscle, the protein blocks the nerve signals that usually make the muscle contract. The muscle therefore relaxes which has the effect of smoothing the overlying skin.

Botox® has been used for over 20 years in the treatment of lines and wrinkles as well as many areas of medicine, such as in the treatment of chronic muscle spasm. The bacteria used to manufacture Botox are very similar to those used to make other commonly used medicines such as Penicillin.

**Q: Is the treatment painful?**

A: No. Botox® injections are relatively painless. If you are particularly concerned or sensitive to pain, the area can be effectively numbed with ice for a few minutes.

**Q: How long will my treatment take?**

A: The first step is a thorough consultation about the areas that you would like to improve. A complete medical history check is then done to ensure that it is perfectly safe to proceed with the treatment. The actual administration of the product typically only takes a few minutes.

**Q: Are there any side effects & can I go out or back to work after my treatment?**

A: Immediately after the treatment, you may have some slight redness and swelling at the injection sites. If you wear make-up, you can gently re-apply this before you leave. If not, these effects will subside in about 20 minutes and generally no-one will notice that anything has been done.

In the following days, you may see some slight bruising which will only last a few days. There are some more serious but extremely rare side effects which will be discussed with you at your consultation, these are best prevented by having your treatment with a skilled, Degree-qualified practitioner.

**Q: Will I see the results immediately?**

A: No. It takes 3-10 days to see the effects of your treatment. You will have a brief review visit at two weeks by which time the full effect of the treatment can be assessed.

**Q: How long will the treatment last?**

A: Initially, the muscle-relaxing effect of your treatment will last about 3 months. As you continue to have Botox, the muscles take longer to recover and you will see the effects last longer (up to 6 months).

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## DERMAL FILLERS

**Q: What is a 'filler' made from and is it safe?**

A: Dermal fillers are a clear gel containing a concentrated component of collagen called Hyaluronic Acid. The gel is injected into the correct layer of the skin to act as a collagen-replacement, giving lift & support. The modern dermal fillers are not animal-derived, rarely cause any allergic reactions and have been used for over 10 years.

**Q: Is the treatment painful?**

A: There is some mild discomfort. A topical (cream) anesthetic is recommended for most facial line treatments. A local anesthetic injection (like a dental injection) is used for treatment of the lips.

**Q: How long will the treatment take?**

A: Once you are properly anesthetized, your treatment should only take about 30 minutes. There will be a thorough consultation and medical history check to ensure it is safe to proceed with treatment.

**Q: Will I see the results immediately and are there any side effects?**

A: Yes - you will see the improvement immediately. You should expect some redness, swelling and mild bruising in the hours and days after your treatment. For some people, this inflammation can take a couple of weeks to resolve completely. By the review visit at 2 weeks, the full effects of your treatment can be assessed.

Lips - because of the highly complex nature of the lip tissue, you should allow at least 2-3 weeks for all of the swelling to subside.

**Q: How long will my treatment last?**

A: Dermal fillers are not only an instant way to replace the lost collagen in your skin. They also have some effect in boosting the production of your own collagen in that area. The treatments are highly effective and will last 4-6 months depending on your age and skin type.