Cosmetic Dentistry and Facial Aesthetics

Trends in Cosmetic Dentistry

The level of aesthetic requirement in clinical practice has increased over the past decade, and this has made it necessary for dentists to explore this field in order to satisfy the existing demand from patients.¹

The ever expanding rise of social media and celebrity gossip magazines has made the public more educated and more driven to enquire and undertake cosmetic dental procedures.

Trends in Facial Aesthetics

The trend today is away from traditional cosmetic surgery and toward less expensive minimally invasive procedures.² The use of cosmetic procedures to reduce the signs of ageing has increased dramatically over the past 10 years.³

However the rapidly rising demand for botulinum toxin and dermal filler treatments together with increasingly complex injection procedures present a growing challenge for today’s expanding aesthetic community. According to current industry estimates for 2013, a total of 1.5 million toxin and dermal filler procedures were carried out in the UK.⁴

Benefits of Cosmetic Dentistry

We live in a world where people will make snap judgements about others from their appearance. Numerous studies⁵ have shown the importance of a warming attractive smile. People with straight teeth are perceived as more successful, smarter and having more dates.

If you lack confidence because of your smile, you may hide away or reduce the number of social interactions both personally and in business.

As well as the improvement in the appearance of your smile, cosmetic dentistry also has health benefits. Solving such problems as cracked,
decayed, missing or mis aligned teeth. Thus as well as improving your appearance, cosmetic dentistry can also solve such problems as periodontal disease, TMJ problems and masticatory issues.

Benefits of Facial aesthetics

Many patients prefer non surgical procedures compared to surgical procedures for a number of reasons: 6

more affordable - patients don’t have to invest in a large one lump sum payment. With facial aesthetics its more regular smaller affordable payments.

minimally invasive treatment - the public are past the fake look. They want the natal look that complements them. Not a ‘wind tunnel’ look that looks artificial and others will notice immediately.

recovery times and side effects - we are all busy people. We cant take weeks off to have a surgical procedure. The public are demanding quick, hassle free procedures so they can resume their hectic lifestyle as soon as possible.

Combining both

The commonality between cosmetic dentistry and facial aesthetics is that the patient is the driving force behind there requests. both modalities are ‘want’ driven and not ‘need’ driven. No one needs cosmetic dentistry or facial aesthetics!

Why dentists should consider facial aesthetics?

We regularly perform injections several times a day. We are comfortable in tis procedure and have mastered how to give injections as comfortable as possible. Dentists are experts in the facial anatomy and structures. We spend hours everyday performing in this region.

Our patients trust us. We have empathy and have built rapport with them. We can offer facial aesthetics in a secure and controlled environment.
In my experience, patients that have undertaken facial aesthetics are more inclined to explore cosmetic dental procedures and vice versa, my cosmetic dental patients were eager to explore the benefits of facial aesthetic treatments.

Specific areas to compliment cosmetic dentistry

The most obvious is the lips. Patients may have perfect straight white teeth, but if the lips are thin or out of proportion then everyone’s eyes will be drawn to this imperfection and not your wonderful dentistry. Plumping up the lips either subtly (injecting the hyaluronic acid dermal filler just in the boxers of the lips) or increasing the volume (injecting in the body of the lips) will enhance their new sparkling smile.

Another common request from my dental patients was volumerisation in the mid face area, notably the cheek area, where the patient may have lost some teeth. As we know once the teeth have been lost, the bone density will decrease and hence cause a loss of volume. The patient may not be able to afford to restore the gaps with implants or bridges, but are concerned with the loss of volume which they can afford.

We can apply the same logic as above and look to replacing loss volume, due to lost teeth or filling out deep lines in the nose to mouth (naso labial folds) and mouth to chin (marionette lines) with dermal fillers.

Now, let’s look at where we can use Botulinum Toxin to target dynamic muscles. As well as the considering to treat the upper third of the face with Botulinum Toxin Type A (the most common areas requested by patients) the dentists can consider specific areas that will complement any cosmetic dentistry that the patient is undertaking or will have completed.

Gummy smiles - in some smiles the upper lip can raise too high and unveil a lot of gummy space. In these patients, you can inject a very small amount of toxin to weaken the muscles responsible for raising the lip. This results in a gentler and softer upward pull when the patient smiles, but still allows all of the teeth to be seen but decreases the
amount of gums that show. The toxin is injected in small increments into the upper musculature with the aim of effecting Levator Labii Superioris and the zygomaticus muscle areas, in an effort to reduce the patients upper lip hypermobility.

Corners of the mouth which point downwards and give a permanent sad look can be treated with toxin. You can inject the toxin into the Depressor Angular Oris muscle and therefore can diminish the downward pull on the corners of the mouth and allow the muscles that elevate the corners to take over.

TMJ disorders can be treated with toxin as part of a treatment plan.

Toxin can be added to treat bruxism in addition to normal dental procedures.

Conclusion

We can conclude that cosmetic dentist and facial aesthetics go hand in hand and will give your patients the best results from their cosmic dental work. And who else is best positioned to offer these facial aesthetic services that you, their dentist.

References


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