

Dental Makeover

By Yvette Stines



©istockphoto.com

If you are one of the many people who shy away from smiling because of your teeth, there are many options that are available in order to correct your smile. A number of individuals are visiting cosmetic dentists so they can show their pearly whites with confidence. There are many things to take into consideration when undergoing a cosmetic enhancement. Since this process can be life changing, it is important to take your time and find a cosmetic dentist and the procedure that is right for you.

your potential cosmetic dentist and ask for information of past patients to obtain their results and satisfaction rating." Dr. Lee Gause, a New York based cosmetic dentist, suggests that "patients should review before and after photos to see the dentist's work." Dr. Gause reminds readers to make sure it is the actual work that was conducted by the dentist because many dentists tend to put forth cases to show particular procedures but they did not do the work that is displayed in the picture. Since

wary of cheap prices; good dentistry tends to be costly," says Dr. Gause. Dr. William A. Hoskyns of the Atlanta Center for Cosmetic Dentistry agrees, "good cosmetic work will always cost more; you really do get what you pay for."

Once you have found the cosmetic dentist that is a right fit, communication is very important within your first visit. "It is important to talk and communicate your desires to your dentist. You should explain what you want to change and what you want to stay the same," says Dr. Gause. The patient should see "a presentation of a treatment plan with several options to achieve the desired goals, along with a clear presentation of the cost of each treatment option," Dr. Cathright Jr., explains. There are several procedures that are offered when it comes to cosmetic dentistry.

A smile make over is life changing. Patients go from awkwardly smiling without showing any teeth, to being full of life with big broad smiles.

When looking for a cosmetic dentist, referrals are best, according to Dr. Edward Cathright Jr., colonel and commanding officer of the Fort Rucker Dental Clinic Command of the United States Army Dental Corps, "ask your personal dentist or visit

"there are no regulatory agencies that check the credentials of anyone claiming to be a cosmetic dentist," according to Dr. Cathright Jr., therefore it is important to do your homework and understand that any type of cosmetic enhancement is an investment. "Be

Porcelain Veneers:

"Veneers are thin porcelain restorations that are permanently bonded to the teeth. They are used to improve the shape, color and contour of the teeth. The procedure takes about two weeks from start to finish and the

upkeep consists of normal cleaning visits, says Dr. Gause. Dr. Cathright Jr. adds that, "veneers can be expected to last from five to 10 years if the procedure is done properly."

Invisalign:

"Invisalign are clear sequences of trays that move teeth like braces. Patients can have straight teeth in a few months without ever wearing braces. The procedure can take four months to a year and a half. The upkeep is wearing the prescribed retainer to keep the teeth straight," explains Dr. Gause.



Zoom Whitening:

"This procedure whitens the teeth in a little over an hour; a peroxide whitening agent and special light is used to remove the stains in the tooth from the inside out. To keep your teeth white after this procedure, along with regular dental visits, simply use a whitening toothpaste."

says Dr. Gause.

As it is very common for your cosmetic dentist to be your general dentist, it is best to visit a cosmetic for the specific procedures you are seeking. Many times general dentists are not trained to conduct the intricate procedures as a cosmetic dentist would. "Many cosmetic procedures performed by 'general dentists' can be more scaring and unnatural than what the patient started with," says Dr. Hoskyns. *Heather McFarland found herself in this situation at 18 years old when her general dentist suggested and performed a dental veneer procedure. "My purpose for

the procedure was cosmetic; my front four teeth were not aligned. My dentist suggested the veneer in order to create a more perfect smile. I was upset because I was not informed of the other options or what the procedure entailed." Now at 30, she strongly suggests individuals who are seeking a cosmetic procedure visit a cosmetic dentist who specializes in

the field. "This specialty gives the patient comfort in knowing that the dentist who is providing services is abreast of the latest advancements in cosmetic dentistry," she says. Undergoing a cosmetic dentistry procedure can be a rewarding experience; as others who receive services and attain a positive outcome, it is good to know that there is a happy ending and a wonderful smile as a result.

When patients are excited about their new look, this is one of the many reasons why dentists love their job. "A smile make over is life changing. Patients go from awkwardly smiling without showing any teeth, to being full of life with big broad smiles," says Dr. Gause. For Dr. Cathright Jr, he finds it rewarding, "when patients return stating that people always compliment them on their dental work and then ask 'who is your dentist', this is by far the highest recommendation that I appreciate as the treating dentist." **EH**



Seven Questions with Cosmetic Dentist Dr. Lee Gause

1. **Why did you become a dentist?** Dentistry is a fantastic balance of art and science.
2. **Where were you educated?** University of North Carolina Chapel Hill and Howard University College of Dentistry.
3. **Where do you work?** I have my own practice in Brooklyn Heights (N.Y)
4. **What did you have to do beyond dental school to**

- become a cosmetic dentist?** Significant post graduate continuing education in techniques in cosmetic dentistry.
5. **What are your career highlights?** I was featured on ABC News in New York to discuss porcelain veneers.
6. **What is your favorite aspect of your profession?** Changing peoples lives and smiles.
7. **As a dentist with your own**

practice, what do you do to relax after a long day? I like to relax with good food and prepare myself for the next busy day of patients. I also like to relax in the Hamptons on the weekends.

For more information on Dr. Lee Gause visit www.brooklynheightsdental.com.