



BY DR. LEA WHEELER

Really Beautiful Smiles

Do you like your smile? Ever think about it? Here's a test...

Do you find ways to hide your teeth while talking? Do you mind showing your teeth while laughing?

If the answer to the last two questions are "yes", then listen up. A trip to the dentist may be able to improve your appearance and your self confidence.

Lips, teeth and gums comprise a big part of our facial features. One-third of our facial features to be exact. Plus, when we speak, eat, or show facial expression, our mouths move, bringing attention to this part of our face. That's why it's so important to make sure they look great.

There are lots of ways that a dentist can improve your smile. If your teeth are kaput, a denture may be the best answer. Dentures can be very beautiful and natural in appearance.

Below is an example of a patient that had old, bulky crowns on her 4 front teeth. These were removed and new, all ceramic crowns were made for the same teeth. Notice also that the shape of the teeth and the shape of the gum tissue were changed to make the appearance more symmetrical.



Before



After

This is one pictorial example of what we've done recently in our office. There is an endless array of scenarios which can be treated beautifully with dental ceramics.

However, if your natural teeth just need a lift, perhaps veneers or all ceramic crowns are appropriate. We will focus this article on dental ceramics.

First of all, the dental ceramics that are available today are INCREDIBLE! They are used primarily for veneers, all ceramic crowns, and porcelain fused to metal crowns. They each have different applications. A veneer is something that is placed on the front and side parts of the tooth. These are used if there are only cosmetic issues that are being addressed, (i.e. if spaces are being closed, color is being changed, etc). An all-ceramic crown is made if there are already existing crowns, or if there are "bondings" or fillings in a tooth that will need to be replaced. An all-ceramic crown fits over the entire surface of the tooth. It may not be appropriate, however, if there are excessive forces applied to the tooth in question, or if the portion of the natural tooth that remains is very limited. A porcelain-fused-to-metal crown would likely be used in the latter two instances. (The metal is hidden under the porcelain). Regardless of the circumstances, porcelains allow dentists to change the shape, color, and size of your teeth. They also can improve the strength of a broken or worn tooth. Additionally, we can change old crowns to new crowns and make a huge difference in the way the teeth and gums look.

One more thing... a beautiful smile is a sign of a healthy smile. A healthy smile is youthful and nice to behold! Don't ignore yours, it can invigorate and improve your whole life.

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