

## Reaching a Desirable Result and Dental Harmony by Staying Up to Date

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In today's highly competitive world, a harmonious and beautiful appearance often marks the difference between personal and professional success or failure. A harmonious appearance can often be determined by a person's smile, this is because the mouth is one of the most visual points of the face. When it comes to dentistry, aesthetics is a constant concern due to the fact that any alteration in aesthetic appearance can have biological and psychological implications. Nowadays, people look for both harmony and dental beauty, due to the fact that there are treatments in modern cosmetic dentistry that can provide a radiant, harmonious, beautiful and long-lasting smile in just one or two appointments.

The dental treatments available for the restoration of teeth affected by dental caries, trauma or alterations of shape, size and color have evolved significantly in the last two decades. These transformations are the result of newer and better dental materials and adhesive systems that allow us to improve aesthetic treatments. Due to this, and in order to fulfill a patient's aesthetic needs with regards to harmony and beauty, dentists need to stay constantly up to date with the latest clinical protocols and be knowledgeable of all the new materials and their characteristics; such as their biocompatibility, optical properties, color stability, mechanical resistance and wear.

The American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry, or AACD, the world's largest dental cosmetics organization, has established superior ethical standards for its members which address both patients and dentists. All of AACD's members strive for excellence by going through an accreditation process so that all treatments are done by high clinical standards and sound ethical principles.

Most countries do not require dentists to be accredited with the prescribed parameters related to biology, clinical protocols, materials or techniques with regards to aesthetic treatments. Therefore, it is up to dentists to stay up-to-date in order to provide exceptional and efficient treatments that don't cause any harm or pain to soft or hard tissues. Since new materials are constantly appearing on the market, new techniques and protocols are being developed and it is up to us, as leaders of the dentist industry, to encourage dentists to stay active by taking or getting involved in continuing education courses, attending congresses, meetings, reading articles and books. The better informed we are, the better treatments we will perform and the more we will avoid failures. Consequently, we will be able to increase our clientele and grow our professional practice.

Aesthetic dentistry should include a comprehensive examination of the entire masticatory system and not just limit itself to a smile checkup; it should be based on an adequate diagnosis that does not contraindicate its use and guarantee its longevity in optimum conditions.

Our ethics should constantly drive us to elevate the standards by which we conduct ourselves and our work, since having a concrete notion of how we should live and behave within our understanding of good and bad and wrong and right as it applies to, and affects, our personal and professional life. And while what is considered ethical can vary from culture to culture, correct protocols and well-done

treatments do not vary, as it is our obligation to make a correct diagnosis, prognosis and provide a reliable treatment plan based on professional criteria.

Additionally, the increased focus and demand for aesthetic dentistry has also forced the profession to face the ethical dilemma of considering if it is necessary or inappropriate? [1] and more importantly: is the dentist capable and well trained, and has he/she developed his/her skills well enough to flawlessly execute an aesthetic treatment?

The implicit assumption accompanying any treatment is that its benefits will outweigh any negative consequences or risks. Likewise, the treatment recommended should also be better than no treatment at all. Therefore, dental clinicians that practice aesthetic dentistry must ensure that they are knowledgeable and skilled in its clinical protocols and proper techniques, stay updated on new materials, and know whether a treatment will be long-lasting or transient. Dentists must also know their limitations and when to refer cases to a more experienced colleague.

I believe that we, as dental professionals, have to be more conscious about ethics, especially when it comes to cosmetic dentistry. The better prepared we are to handle this golden opportunity, the more successful we will be. Within the pages of this issue for EC Dental Science, some of the best minds in our field have shared their concepts and techniques to help us grow as professionals in an interdisciplinary way and to update us so that we can provide better patient care.

### Bibliography

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