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Q. I am embarrassed about my teeth but afraid of the dentist. What can I do?

A. If you feel this way, sedation dentistry is the way to go. You will feel nothing, experience no discomfort, get all or most of your treatment done at once, and remember very little. To learn more about sedation dentistry, visit www.adcplano.com.

— Dr. Mark Sotell

Keeping Up Appearances

The 2004 Cosmetic and Plastic Surgery Reference Guide

by Jennifer Hayes

Unless you've been blessed with perfect genes, you'll need more than a gym membership and the latest beauty cream to get the look you want. Those who are serious about making major enhancements to their appearance know that the most powerful beauty tool of all is cosmetic and plastic surgery.

In 2002 more than 6 million Americans discovered this tried and true beauty secret. Improved technologies and procedures in cosmetic plastic surgery and cosmetic dentistry have made it possible for men and women who have spent years trying to improve their appearances to get the look they've dreamed of in a matter of days—or even hours.

When perfect bodies and faces meet us every time we turn on the television, flip through a magazine, or look up at a billboard, we're reminded that what's on the outside does matter. Fortunately, Dallas isn't short on image experts who can sculpt and shape us until what we see in the mirror reflects how we feel inside. New advances, products, and techniques in cosmetic surgery and cosmetic dentistry have resulted in results so natu-

ral-looking that more people than ever are guessing, "Did she or didn't she?"

"Everyone is looking for results," says Dr. Raul Rodriguez with Rejuvenex Medical. "People feel younger than they look. And since Americans are living longer in general, they want ways to turn back the clock as far as their appearance goes. Fortunately, in addition to improved plastic surgery procedures, there are now just as many non-invasive procedures available that enable people to look as young as they feel without major surgery, scars, or significant downtime and for less money."

Dr. Diane Gibby, a board-certified plastic surgeon with The Women's Center for Cosmetic and Plastic Surgery, says cosmetic surgery is more popular than ever, thanks to safer procedures and an overall desire to live a healthier lifestyle.

"In recent years, more people have felt that if the procedure someone wants is performed by a qualified physician in a safe setting and it makes them feel better about themselves, then it is perfectly acceptable," Gibby says. "There is absolutely nothing wrong with wanting to look as good as you feel and boost your self-esteem."

Take the Smile Test

To determine if you're ready to change your appearance with cosmetic dentistry, take the Smile Test, developed by Dallas cosmetic dentist, Dr. Mark Sowell. Look in the mirror or at a recent picture of yourself. Then rate your smile from one to 10 in each of the categories below—with 10 being "love it" and one being "hate it." If you score a 56 to 63, you are probably satisfied with your smile. If you score below 50, it might be time to consider a smile evaluation with a cosmetic dentist.



Choose a cosmetic dentist with many years of experience and a long list of successful patient outcomes.

Gum tissue. Does it show too much? Is it irregular or uneven?

Smile line. Does the edge of your upper teeth follow the shape of your lower lip?

Whiteness. Are your teeth yellow from age, coffee, or tobacco?

Shape. Are your teeth short and square or long and thin? Which shape would you prefer?

Length. Do you show too much or too little of your teeth?

Rotations or spaces. Are your teeth gappy? Are some of your teeth twisted?

Alignment and symmetry. Does the left side of your smile look like the right side?

ugly and seem like such a hassle. Is there another way to straighten my teeth?

A. Porcelain veneers, also called laminates, are precision-shaped sheaths that are bonded to the existing teeth. This can have the appearance of lengthening, straightening, whitening, and smoothing out the teeth. Many times adults have an okay bite, but their front teeth are slightly crooked. Veneers can make your smile appear more perfectly aligned. Plus, the procedure spans about three weeks, opposed to the several years that braces can require. Usually, patients have only their upper teeth done because that is the most pronounced part of their smile. For the teeth without porcelain veneers, the dentist will most likely perform a whitening treatment, so that all the teeth will match and transition seamlessly.

— *Dr. Harry Sagg, Wheatland Dental Care*

Q. I have been told I have the beginning stages of gum disease, which I know will eventually affect the appearance of my teeth and gums. I am afraid of having oral surgery. Do I have other options?

A. Periolasé is an FDA- and ADA-approved laser that can vaporize the bacteria and build-up on your teeth—the major cause of gum disease. The treatment allows tissues to heal and become bacteria-free after one or two sessions. With Periolasé there is no cutting, almost no pain, no bleeding, and faster recovery than with oral surgery. It also costs less than other gum procedures.

— *Dr. Barbara McDaniel*

Q. What will I look like after my cosmetic dentistry procedure is finished?

A. I suggest patients bring in photos of smiles they like, whether the photo is of someone they know or a picture from a magazine. The next step is a thorough consultation where all of your desires for your smile are discussed in great detail with your dentist. From there, in our office, we will make a temporary mock-up that will allow you to get the most realistic result possible of how your smile will look, including the shade and shape of each tooth. Once all of the information has been decided upon, the lab begins to fabricate the new restorations to your

specifics, giving you the look you desire.”
— *Dr. Kenneth Hamlett*

Q. I am embarrassed about my teeth but afraid of the dentist. What can I do?

A. If you feel this way, sedation dentistry is the way to go. You will feel nothing, experience no discomfort, get all or most of your treatment done at once, and remember very little. To learn more about sedation dentistry, visit www.adeplano.com.

— *Dr. Mark Sowell*

Q. I am considering cosmetic facial surgery. Should I also consider having my smile evaluated?

A. The “Smile Profile” at Somatique Medical Dental Spa measures smile brightness, symmetry, proportions, lip support, as well as other aspects of the smile and its impact on facial features. Diagnostic impressions and photos provide the patient and doctor with specific details and help shape mutual goals that result in an ideal smile.

— *Beverly Breslers, Somatique Medical Dental Spa*