
THE NEW HOLLYWOOD SMILE

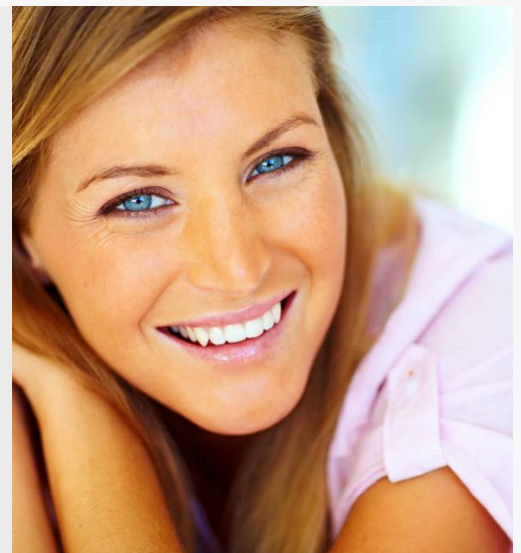
By Dr. J.J. Serfontein



Over the past few years, we have seen a complete reinvention of the art and science of cosmetic dentistry. It has become necessary to create new techniques that reduce, or even eliminate, the need to sacrifice healthy teeth structures and deliver far superior aesthetic results that can last a lifetime with minimal upkeep. We live in an age when everyone carries a high-resolution digital camera and photos of our faces are in the public domain within seconds of being snapped. Many aspire to beauty trends set by celebrities - and are bombarded with their flawless images online. We are also exposed to countless cosmetic surgery horror stories, so whilst demand for great smiles is on the increase, patients demand safer and less-invasive techniques.

WHAT IS A HOLLYWOOD SMILE?

People may still want a Hollywood smile, but the meaning of that phrase has changed significantly over the last few years. People don't want fake white piano keys for teeth. They still want straighter, brighter teeth but they want it to be a convincingly natural look. Natural teeth have highly complex surface anatomy, texture, colour variation, translucency and all sorts of imperfections. Well we don't mimic the flaws but we do keep some 'perfect imperfections' in there to maintain a beautiful, natural look.



CREATING YOUR HOLLYWOOD SMILE



If your teeth are worn down, heavily discoloured, filled or chipped, you will probably need veneers to create the Hollywood Smile. A porcelain veneer is a thin layer of porcelain that is bonded to the front surface of a tooth to change its appearance. Recent advances in porcelain technology have been focused on reducing the thickness of veneers so less tooth enamel needs to be removed in order to apply them.

WHAT'S THE CATCH

This only really works if the teeth are already straight. Sadly, the main complaint in cosmetic dentistry is crowded teeth. This inevitably means that teeth that are twisted or protruding would need to be cut back to make room for a veneer to sit flush on that tooth. This approach is really unhealthy for teeth and doesn't look great either.

STRAIGHTENING TEETH

There have been huge advances in orthodontics in recent years. There are now several options that are fast, comfortable and barely visible that have become popular with adults.

CERAMIC BRACES

Ceramic braces are effective over the full range of case types, have low-visibility and are also excellent value.

INVISALIGN

Invisalign is a series of clear, rigid plastic trays that incrementally align the teeth. This suits an increasingly wide range of case types and is also very popular

LINGUAL BRACES

Lingual braces are also highly appealing to adults because these fixed braces are hidden behind the tooth for the ultimate in invisibility and precise control of treatment.

KEEPING TEETH STRAIGHT



It's a well-known fact that long-term care is required to prevent teeth from relapsing after orthodontic treatment. What is less well-known is that teeth continue to move throughout life even if no orthodontic treatment was ever carried out. As part of our approach to cosmetic dentistry, we not only to give patients great looking smiles but also to ensure they have a stable result that lasts for many, many years. Patients benefit from early treatment of mild crowding to prevent crowding that inevitably worsens with time. Once aligned, a very discrete retainer can be fitted to ensure a stable aesthetic and functional result that will simplify maintenance and reduce long-term costs.

3 STEP SMILE

As soon as teeth start to straighten, the natural beauty of those teeth reappear and all they need is some whitening and smoothing or bonding of some worn edges to create the Hollywood Smile.

This 3-Step Smile: Alignment, Bleaching, Bonding/Contouring

This forms the cornerstone of a new approach to cosmetic dentistry, giving fast, simple, safe and beautiful results. Crooked teeth often suffer from uneven wear, so even when they've been straightened and whitened they still look like a broken fence. Porcelain veneers can be a great option, particularly if the teeth are heavily discoloured or the surface enamel heavily pitted and worn. But if the teeth are in good condition then composite bonding can maintain the maximum amount of good natural tooth structure and fix the worn edges

GUMS

Another very common complaint is the excessive display of gum tissue in the smile. There are a number of causes of gummy smile, usually related to the discrepancy of the size and position between teeth, jaws and lips. We have a wealth of experience in the various treatment options and have achieved amazing results with gum lifts and porcelain veneers.



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Dr. Serfontein is a member of the following organisations:
South African Academy of Aesthetic Dentistry (SAAAD)
International Team for Implantology (ITI)
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