

Selected Topics in Esthetic Case Management

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The importance of an attractive smile in contemporary culture — for better or worse — cannot be overstated, and has been extensively studied.^{1,2} This social imperative for good looks and the pervasive marketing of dental products and procedures to consumers have combined to create an unprecedented demand for appearance-related dental treatment. Concurrent with this phenomenon is the inexorable progression of technology and the resultant array of diagnostic and treatment advances presently available to practitioners. Collectively, these factors have positively impacted dental practice busyness as more individuals seek elective treatments, and patients are benefiting from improved materials techniques. It's a good time to be a patient and to be a dentist.

Despite the advances, however, many fundamental principles of clinical dental practice remain unchanged. Specifically, prudent case selection, thorough diagnosis, and meticulous planning and execution of treatment — all with strict adherence to biologic and ethical principles — continue to define the standard of care. These principles must be applied to elective improvement of dental esthetics with the same diligence as that which traditionally guides the prevention and management of oral disease. The authors of this issue's articles have selected topics from the broad category of esthetic dentistry that cover some common clinical issues and reflect these principles of appropriate care.

Dr. Stephen R. Snow presents effective strategies for ensuring successful treatment outcomes in complex esthetic

cases. This detailed article provides approaches to patient assessment, diagnosis, and esthetic treatment delivery employing evidence-based methods and current technologies.

Management of the periodontal-restorative interface is discussed by Drs. Paulo M. Camargo, Phillip R. Melnick, and Luciano M. Camargo. Their article focuses on crown lengthening in the esthetic zone, reviewing contemporary treatment modalities, and their indications.

Finally, my paper addresses the most common adverse event associated with the most popular esthetic dentistry treatment: tooth hypersensitivity induced by peroxide-containing whitening products. Current information on etiology and management are provided.

The authors hope you will enjoy this issue and find the information useful.

REFERENCES

1. Eli I, Bar-Tal Y, Kostovetski I. At first glance: Social meanings of dental appearance. *J Public Health Dent* 61:150-4, 2001.
2. Newton JT, Prabhu N, Robinson PG. The impact of dental appearance on the appraisal of personal characteristics. *Int J Prosthodont* 16:429-34, 2003.