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The Use of Cosmetic Dentistry

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Abstract: Cosmetic dentistry is a method of professional oral care that focuses on improving the appearance of your teeth. And although cosmetic dentistry procedures are usually elective rather than essential, some treatment cases also provide restorative benefits. Learn about the most common procedures and how they work.

Keywords: Inlays and Onlays, Composite Bonding, Dental Veneers, Teeth Whitening, Implants, a Cosmetic Dentist.

Inlays and Onlays

This cosmetic dentistry procedure is also known as indirect fillings, which are made by a dental laboratory. They are used when a tooth has mild to moderate decay or insufficient tooth structure to support a filling. Provided there is no damage to the tooth cusps, the inlay is placed directly onto the tooth surface. However, when the cusp or a more significant portion of the tooth is damaged, your dentist may use an onlay to cover the tooth's entire surface.

Inlays and onlays were once made of gold but typically are made in a dental laboratory from a composite of porcelain or ceramic material and attached to the teeth with adhesive dental cement. They provide support to strengthen teeth, restore their shape, and avoid any further decay or deterioration.

Composite Bonding

Composite bonding refers to the repair of decayed, damaged, or discolored teeth using material that resembles tooth enamel color. Your dentist drills out the tooth decay then applies the composite onto the tooth's surface, and then "sculpts" it into the right shape before curing it with a high-intensity light. Also referred to as "bonding," this procedure effectively covers the tooth's damage and gives the appearance of a healthy tooth in its place. Bonding is one of the least expensive cosmetic dentistry procedures available to patients with tooth decay, chipped or cracked teeth, and worn-down edges.

Dental Veneers

Typically manufactured from medical-grade ceramic, dental veneers are custommade caps that go over your natural teeth. They look exceptionally realistic and can resolve numerous cosmetic problems, ranging from crooked teeth to cracked or damaged enamel to noticeable gaps between two teeth. The dentist applies the veneer to the front of each tooth using a dental adhesive.

Teeth Whitening

Teeth whitening is one of the most popular cosmetic dentistry procedures. It can be performed at your dentist's office, often in a single visit. The dental hygienist will first remove plaque, tartar, and other debris from each tooth's surface, restoring its natural appearance. The teeth can then be whitened with a bleaching agent to achieve an even lighter shade than this original color. Over the years, teeth

become stained and worn from food, drinks, medication, and personal habits such as smoking. Whitening coats the teeth, and this procedure can be done in the dental office or at home. Additionally, patients can use toothpaste to achieve the same effect in one to two weeks. This product works to whiten teeth more than three shades over two weeks and optimal results within four weeks.

Implants

Dental implants are used to replace lost or damaged teeth. The dentist inserts a small titanium screw into the jaw at the site of the missing tooth, which serves as the support for a crown. These implants are almost indistinguishable from the surrounding natural teeth. Once the bone and supporting tissue fuse to the implant, they are permanently secured into place. Patients need to practice diligent oral hygiene during the implant placement period and after the implant procedure is completed to clean plaque and food debris from the area.

If you're considering cosmetic dentistry procedures, it's vital to find a cosmetic dentist who specifically offers the option you're interested in. They will give you more guidance on which procedures would be best for you.

If you're not satisfied with your smile, modern cosmetic dentistry can help. This method of professional oral care focuses on improving the appearance of your mouth, teeth, gums, and overall smile. Common procedures include teeth whitening, veneers, fillings, and implants.

Cosmetic dentistry is becoming more and more popular, with the industry as a whole projected to reach \$32 billion by 2026. Although it's not an essential procedure, cosmetic treatment can restore confidence in your smile.

What Does a Cosmetic Dentist Do?

A cosmetic dentist is responsible for a variety of procedures — from minor fixes to major surgeries. Here are a few of the cosmetic procedures they offer.

Teeth Whitening

Teeth whitening is one of the most basic cosmetic dentistry procedures—as well as one of the least expensive. Over time, teeth can become stained from food, drinks, medications, or other habits like smoking. Many people turn to teeth whitening to make their smile brighter.

After teeth have been cleaned of plaque, tartar, and other debris, teeth whitening can bleach the surface of teeth to create a brighter, whiter appearance. While over-the-counter products like toothpaste, rinses, and whitestrips can offer some results, professional tooth whitening can provide a shade up to 5 to 8 times lighter.

Dental Veneers

Dental veneers are thin, white shells made from medical-grade porcelain, resin, or ceramic. They're custom made for each patient to resemble their natural teeth.

Before attaching the veneers, the dentist removes some enamel from the tooth's surface to allow the shells to be bonded realistically to the front of the teeth. Dental veneers can fix a number of cosmetic issues, including crooked teeth, damaged enamel, and gaps between teeth.

Dental Crowns

A dental crown, also known as a dental cap, fits over a decayed or damaged tooth. These crowns can keep a weakened tooth from breaking or used cosmetically to cover misshapen or severely discolored teeth.

They can also be used to cover other procedures, like root canals, enamel fillings, dental bridges, or dental implants.

Inlays and Onlays

Inlays and onlays, also known as indirect fillings, are used when a tooth is too decayed to support a typical filling. These fillings are created in a dental laboratory and bonded in place by a cosmetic dentist. An “inlay” is when the material is bonded in the center of the tooth. An “onlay” is when the filling covers one or more parts of the tooth or covers the tooth’s entire surface.

This procedure is an alternative to the crown, preserving more of the tooth’s natural surface while still strengthening and restoring the tooth after decay or deterioration.

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