



teeth

NEW SMILE, NEW YOU

SYDNEY COSMETIC, IMPLANT AND RECONSTRUCTIVE DENTIST **DR DAVID DUNN** FROM THE MACQUARIE STREET CENTRE IN SYDNEY SAYS A BEAUTIFUL SMILE RADIATES YOUTH AND VITALITY.

While many people say the eyes are the windows to the soul, I believe this is also true of a smile – it is a primary means of communication and a reflection of personality. A smile plays an essential role in expression and communication between each and every person, and has a direct relationship with self-esteem and our socio-professional lives. Basically, we all want a beautiful and attractive smile!

The aesthetic restoration of a person's smile is an important medical procedure that can never be undertaken without a logical and systematised approach. This begins with an understanding of the person's needs and wants with respect to their ultimate smile aesthetics. Further, it requires a thorough analysis that starts with an appraisal of overall facial harmony and smile symmetry, and continues to the assessment of soft tissue or gum contours and symmetry through to the more detailed issues of tooth arrangement, size, colour, shaping and surface texture.

Within the profession, and especially in the field of high-end implant and cosmetic dental reconstruction, we refer to this as diagnosis and treatment planning. Unfortunately, we see all too often these vital steps are overlooked or have not had enough attention paid, with the outcome being the final treatment result is less than what should have been achieved.

So, what should you do if you are contemplating cosmetic or implant dental treatment? Here's a quick checklist:

1. Seek experience and reputation

Most dental cosmetic and reconstructive procedures are invasive and hence it is very important the diagnosis and treatment planning be undertaken correctly and to the highest quality. Ensure you have experienced and competent clinicians undertaking your treatment to provide the best possible solution for you. While there can be multiple treatment plans, according to priorities or budgets, there can be only one diagnosis. To use an old carpenter's adage, 'measure it twice and cut it once'.

Cosmetic and reconstructive dental procedures are the result of a combination of clinical, technical and artistic skills.



BEFORE



AFTER cosmetic dentistry by Dr Dunn



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You are not 'buying a product' but investing in a range of factors including experience, skills and technical support. Don't hesitate to get a second opinion – look for quality and you will be seldom disappointed.

2. False economy

It is easy to pay too little but rarely can you pay too much, and this is especially important when you're dealing with services requiring multiple skills. Most patients want a modern, clean and comfortable environment in which to have their treatment undertaken. Most people also want to be treated and looked after by friendly, knowledgeable and professional staff, as well as the clinician.

The facility should be 'best practice' in sterilisation procedures and use registered, up-to-date equipment and technologies for treatment. Unfortunately, today there are numerous options to cut corners and use lesser quality materials and cheap overseas laboratories. In summary, all of this costs money and is reflected in the fee levels. I believe it is simply impossible to have high quality treatment without higher than average fees.

3. Listening to your needs and wants

Look for a clinician who wants to spend time listening to what your concerns and needs are. While there is only one diagnosis, there can be multiple treatment plans to accommodate your particular needs and wants, including

budget considerations. For some, it may be ideal to have your whole treatment plan undertaken in one go; for others, work may need to be staggered for time issues or budget needs. Look for a practitioner who can work with you and develop a staged treatment plan so you can fulfil your treatment goals over a time period that works for you. Your clinician needs to actively listen and understand your priorities. Communication is everything!

4. Jack of all trades, master of none

Beware of the practitioner who presents as an 'expert in all fields' when it comes to cosmetic and reconstructive dentistry. This is a specialised field and requires ongoing education and commitment. The cosmetic/reconstructive field is complex and requires specific skills across a broad range of both clinical and technical matters. Look for a practitioner dedicated and experienced in the field.

5. People skills

People are a big part of your treatment process! We all want to be treated by people we both trust and like. This includes not only your clinician but all of the supporting staff – from how the phone is answered at reception and your appointments made, right through to your clinical assistants helping you in your treatment. Look for friendly, competent and professional people; they directly reflect the quality of care you will receive. **acsm**