

7 Dentist's OPINION

Microscope-Enhanced Dentistry: The Quality Beyond the Commodity of Esthetic Dentistry

Esthetic dentistry is becoming increasingly popular, and the competition between practitioners is stiffening. Esthetic dentists who have devoted years of study to the perfection of their technique must find a way to distinguish themselves from the crowd.

I think microscope-enhanced dentistry is the key. The operating microscope is superior to good vision or even loupes. If a dentist with perfect vision is checking a margin with the naked eye, he or she can see one tenth of a millimeter (about the thickness of a human hair). Using 3-power loupes magnifies the image, allowing the dentist to see about 0.03 mm, but it also results in a limited amount of light and field of vision. With a surgical microscope, it is possible to see dimensions as small as 0.005 mm. The surgical microscope has the added benefits of excellent light and a wider field of vision. Our fine motor skills are limited by the bounds of our visual acuity. In other words, if you can see it, you can do it. The detailed quality of your work will improve simply because it is visible.

In addition to allowing for higher visual accuracy, a microscope can help you create smooth flowing preparations, impeccable impressions that include every tooth, and beautiful prototype temporary restorations; enhance the ease of seating; allow the perfect final fit with 100% cement removal; and maintain the integrity of the biologic width and the detail of subtle color characterizations. These elements all combine to achieve a quality of dental treatment that stands out in the dental community. Your laboratory, your auxiliaries, other dentists, and your patients will notice and so eventually will the larger community.

The Buzz

It is your reputation for quality work that determines the size of your clientele. In building a strong reputation, you need to consider 2 groups of people—your colleagues and your patients.

A surgical microscope can assist you in creating beautiful and exceptionally well-fitting prototype restorations, which draw favorable attention from the specialists who help with coordinated treatment for shared patients. Whether an esthetic patient is referred for endodontic treatment, periodontal care, implants, or postorthodontic care, the specialists and their staff will see those prototype restorations and notice and comment on the superior work. Not only will they tell the patient, but the patients will tell their friends, causing new patients to arrive at your door.

This chain of events creates a buzz about certain dentists who are known for their outstanding dentistry. The laboratory technician will also notice your meticulous preparations, and the technician can create another level of buzz. If you send exceptionally good work to the laboratory, the technician will become a good referral source for the practice.



Author

Lynn A Jones, DDS
Private Practice
Bellevue, Washington
Phone: 425.688.1345
Fax: 425.688.1390
Email: doctor@drlynnajones.com

In addition to having a good rapport with your colleagues, a second essential component to building a strong reputation is your patients. Therefore, it is important that you ensure a pleasant experience for your patient from start to finish. A microscope can help you achieve that goal.

The patient will observe that the restorations seated perfectly the first time. The seat appointment will be quick and uninterrupted by multiple adjustments to the new restorations or the natural teeth. For the dentist, microscopically accurate preparations and impressions will eliminate the stress of unpredictable adjustment time in an already busy schedule at the seat appointment. Perfectly fitting restorations preserve credibility with the patient and extra time for the practitioner. Avoiding additional seat appointments is a time and money saver for the dentist and a practice builder with patients.

Generally, the microscope significantly improves the level of comfort the patient experiences. For example, most esthetics patients have worn temporary crowns. When they receive a temporary crown that feels absolutely smooth at the margins and is easy to clean, they will often make favorable comments about the difference from their previous experiences. With high magnification, it is so easy to read the margins of a provisional restoration for precise trimming so that the marginal fit of temporaries is similar to

the fit of the final restoration.

The patients mention that they notice less sensitivity presumably caused by the open margins or poor fit they have so often experienced in the past. The tissue remains healthy, and there is no recession or inflammation. When the work is completed, the patient will notice that the teeth look good, the work was painless, and there were no complications. Later, they will discover that they have good tissue health; the teeth are easy to clean, floss, and maintain; the dentistry is sealed around the margins; and all of the decay and other pathology have been managed effectively. Through the duration of the treatment—from consultation to recovery—the patient will have had a pleasant and seamless experience.

Conclusion

I have found word of mouth to be my most effective marketing tool. I have tried advertising on television, radio, and in the Yellow pages, with limited results. When people look for a practitioner in the esthetic industry, they usually consider his or her reputation, and they will research it both through colleagues and other clients. The surgical microscope is a valuable tool for any dedicated esthetic dentist. Only with high magnification can a dentist produce such fine quality and the kind of dentistry that creates legends, which advertising and hype can never buy.