

## VENEERS, SMILE DESIGN

Porcelain veneers are perfectly fitting thin pieces of colour matched porcelain. They become part of the tooth, by using the ultra-modern bonding (gluing) systems we use today. They are not only a cosmetic restoration, but are used to lengthen, widen, close gaps etc. and structurally enhance teeth.

It is, however, extremely important for the treatment to be carried out by a dentist who has been properly trained in "SMILE DESIGN" AND "OCCLUSION" techniques. Here at The Essex Smile Centre, we have several cosmetic dentists offering the skills to provide a comprehensive plan which can be executed to the highest standards.

### HOW MANY WILL I NEED?

Veneers can not only improve the look of your smile, but also make it appear more complete by something we call "treating the buccal corridor" (the appearance of the teeth at the side of your smile). This is an important consideration as, most of the time, you look at people from the side rather than directly face on. Therefore, when somebody sees your smile across the room at a party or in a restaurant, it is generally from a side angle. To treat the buccal corridor and give you a complete smile, we need to treat the premolar teeth as well. Each case is different, but veneers are usually performed in pairs. Therefore, buccal corridor filling will generally require 8 or 10 veneers.

### THE ASSESSMENT

Before we start any treatment, we must assess whether some of the teeth can be moved orthodontically with Invisalign. We would always offer this to patients with crowded or spaced teeth as we strive to remove as little tooth as possible and maintain tooth structure.

If you have old fillings in any of the teeth, these will be removed, as we want the porcelain to glue directly onto the tooth all the way round, giving strength and a perfect bacterial resistant seal.

If your teeth have no fillings, are not crowded, rotated or spaced then we will be reducing 0.25 mm to 0.5 mm of tooth to give the ceramist room to manufacture a perfect smile. These are sometimes called Lumineers.

This patient had severe tooth wear due to grinding habits and fizzy drinks



10 veneers were placed with tooth whitening and removal of the lip piercing to prevent veneer damage

### WHAT WILL THEY LOOK LIKE?

The dentist and technician will match the shade and shape of the veneers to your other teeth, face shape and your complexion using a natural light shade taker and your dentist will take photographs which he will email to the ceramist. In most cases, we recommend that you visit the ceramist for him to meet you and talk about the colour and shape of your new smile. It is important to bring up any points or concerns you may have early, as it is too late once the veneers have been bonded to the teeth. As we have said in most cases your dentist will have recommended more than one veneer, as it is much easier to achieve good symmetry and a natural appearance.

## THE SMILE DESIGN

The smile design begins with a complete smile assessment, which involves taking some impressions, photos and x-rays. This allows your dentist and the technician to examine your case before anything is done, ensuring an aesthetically pleasing and durable end result.

The ceramist technician is an invaluable member of the team that creates your new smile. He assesses your bite, the way your teeth slide and grind, the length and width of your teeth as well as your facial structure. He then makes recommendations to the dentist about the best way to achieve your new smile. Your 'bite' is especially important when we change the way you smile. This assessment allows us to build you into a more stable position which has many benefits to you for the future and longevity of your new smile.

Once the ceramist has assessed all the information and discussed your case with your dentist, he provides a 'Wax Up' of the case which allows you to see what the final result may look like. At this second appointment the patient is asked if they are happy to proceed to the preparation phase of the treatment. If you are unsure then a trial smile can be performed. This where the dentist uses a plastic material in the putties made from the wax up to make a plastic replica of the how the veneers will look without sticking anything to the teeth. The patient can then see and experience their new smile before any preparation of the teeth has taken place.

## PREPARATION

At this visit, the teeth are shaped to allow for the thickness of the veneer. An impression or 3-D scan is then taken of the prepared teeth and sent to the ceramist technician who will construct the veneers to the planned design.

The dentist will then construct your temporary veneers from the "wax-up" he received from the ceramist. This means that when the appointment is finished you will have a new smile, which will be very close to the final result. We then like you to come for a brief appointment to check how you are getting on with your new teeth. We check your bite, appearance, speech and ask you

how you feel about them. You will probably have had some positive reaction from close family and friends.

## VENEER FIT APPOINTMENT

(USUALLY 2-3 WEEKS AFTER PREPARATION)

At the next visit the temporary veneers are removed and the porcelain veneers are tried on each tooth. After your dentist has checked the fit, they will ask you to have a look yourself. If you have any reservations about colour, shape, size, or any other factor, be sure to speak up now. If you are happy, the veneers will then be bonded onto your teeth, so that the tooth and veneer become one entity. It is extremely important to speak up at this point if you are unhappy with any aspect of the veneers, as once they are cemented on it is a long and expensive process to remove any at a later time.

## CARING FOR YOUR NEW VENEERS:

- ▶ It is important in the first 24 hours to avoid hard or sticky foods.
- ▶ These types of restorations are very strong but can still break if they are abused. Avoid chewing very sticky foods, ice, pens, or other objects.
- ▶ Don't worry about mild sensitivity to hot or cold foods. It will disappear gradually over a few weeks. Infrequently sensitivity lasts longer than six weeks. Please contact us if this occurs you may need root canal therapy.
- ▶ If your dentist has given you a small splint or mouth guard to wear while you sleep, then it is important to wear this, as it will protect your veneers from breaking. If you look after your veneered teeth, then it is certainly possible for them to last much longer than the average life span of 7-10 years.
- ▶ As already mentioned, the best way to keep these restorations for as long as possible is with regular care. This includes your regular examinations and careful cleaning at home