

Headaches and building a healthy bite

By: Ted Murray, DDS, MAGD



Ted Murray

We frequently see people that want a nicer smile because their front teeth are worn or broken. They want cosmetic dentistry. Often the signs of a more serious underlying problem are evident to the astute dentist, including advanced wear of the teeth, collapsed bite, and over-closure of the jaw. Further evaluation may find the person has been grinding, clenching, has an improper bite, improper jaw position and poor function. This can lead to a variety of symptoms that can range from

annoying to disabling.

Millions of people suffer from headaches, which they attribute to stress. They assume there is nothing they can do. They are often wrong. In many cases their problems can be diagnosed and corrected through Neuromuscular Dentistry.

Through computerized scientific analysis (see photo at right) of the muscles of the head and neck the optimal relaxed position of the jaw and surrounding muscles can be determined. Once this position has been found there are three ways to treat. An orthotic (removable dental appliance) followed by comprehensive adjustment to the bite, orthodontics to gradually shift the position of the teeth and bite, or complete dental restoration to the optimal bite position (Full Mouth Reconstruction).

People with broken down or missing teeth usually don't realize these dental problems might be the cause of their headaches, popping joints, aching jaws, shoulder and neck pain. As teeth are repaired through the years unintentionally altering the bite, as they are lost without replacement, as they are ground down from bruxism (night grinding), the jaw no longer settles into a relaxed position.

This may cause the muscles of head, neck and jaw to be in tension, which can create the distress of frequent headaches. By restoring the upper and lower teeth (Full Mouth Reconstruction), the jaw is returned



Karin Loukinen, M.D. (Pictured)

"Getting rid of my headaches was an unexpected benefit."

to its optimal position, providing relief from symptoms that would afflict them for the rest of their lives. For an appointment contact: Ted Murray, DDS, 4200 Asbury Road, Dubuque, IA 52002. (563) 556-2711

Ignore your teeth and face the consequences

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It's no secret. People are living longer now. It is estimated that 1/3 of women alive today will live to be 100 years old. Ignoring your teeth or making the wrong choices when you are younger can mean bigger dental problems when you are older.

Teeth need ongoing care and maintenance. The best way is through comprehensive dentistry to evaluate not only decay and periodontal disease but also identification and management of destructive forces of failing fillings, the bite and misalignment of the jaws and teeth.

In my 29 years of practicing dentistry it's sad to say I have encountered too many people who have ignored advice to correct problems early. The unfortunate belief of waiting until it breaks or hurts is usually a prescription for failure. Often to do this results in expensive, heroic and short-lived repairs and too often loss of teeth.

So if you don't want to spend your senior years with few or no teeth act now. A comprehensive dental examination is a good start. Then make a plan to keep your teeth for a lifetime.

What you should know about choosing a Cosmetic Dentist.

Cosmetic Dentistry improves the beauty and health of your smile. Procedures include closing gaps between teeth, whitening discolored or stained teeth, repairing chipped teeth, broken or worn teeth, repositioning crowded teeth, Invisalign, replacing missing teeth, or replacing old metal fillings.

Are you a candidate?

Cosmetic dentistry is the right choice if you avoid smiling, don't want people to see your teeth, or are embarrassed about the color of your teeth. Many people notice a significant increase in personal confidence – when you look better you feel better! In fact it may just change your life.

Selecting a cosmetic dentist.

Advancements in cosmetic dental treatments and technologies are changing faster than ever, requiring dentists to pursue significant, ongoing training and education. Ask to see a portfolio of the dentist's work as well as any post-graduate training he or she may have. Cosmetic dentistry is an art as well as a science.

What you should know.

Facts: Cosmetic dentistry is not taught in most undergraduate dental schools and no two dentists are alike. However, more than 5000 dentists worldwide have received vigorous, world-class post-graduate training, essential to performing comprehensive cosmetic dentistry, at the Las Vegas Institute for Advanced Dental Studies. Dr. Ted Murray is a clinical instructor at this premier training center where dentists from around the world come for hands-on training, provided at the highest professional standards.

What you should ask.

When doing your research for a dentist, check their training and commitment to continuing education. Ask if they have had real-patient training under the supervision of experts in the field. Ask when was the last course they attended. Ask to see before and after photographs of actual cases they have completed. As with medicine, dentistry has changed significantly over the years and you want a dentist who stays current. Ask your dentist how they would design your smile. Properly trained dentists will explain the protocol and make sure you will like your smile before it becomes final.



Photo is actual case performed by Dr. Murray

Porcelain Veneers

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Creating your perfect smile, one that is unique to you, is a blend of art, science and experience. The many things that need to come together to produce your beautiful new smile require great attention to detail. It requires planning.

This begins with meticulous records, which include photographs and models of your teeth. Design measurements can then be applied to determine ideal size and shape of your teeth. Position of the teeth as they relate to your lips and gum contours are also critical and need to be part of the master plan.

The result is a waxed model that can be previewed by you and used as the ultimate blueprint for the successful smile makeover.

Porcelain veneers are thin porcelain facings. They can be used to alter the shape, color, size and spacing of your teeth. They are very life-like in appearance and offer strength, beauty and durability.

Not all porcelain veneers are the same. The background and training of the dentist and the dental laboratory used are important considerations. The American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (AACD.com) maintains a list of member dentists who aspire to the highest standards of Cosmetic dentistry and who have had the training to deliver the results you expect. Attendance at training institutes like the Las Vegas Institute of Advanced Dental Studies (leadingdentists.com) further assures the dentist's expertise.