

No need to go to Beverly Hills

*Extreme make-overs—
right in your own backyard!*

YOU HAVE SEEN THEM ON TV—NEW HAIR, NEW EYEBROWS, NEW CHIN, NEW BODY—AND THAT FABULOUS NEW SMILE! Be honest – haven't you dreamed about a beautiful new smile? Maybe they could be a little whiter, or a little straighter, or just a little longer like they were 20 years ago? You could camp out at the *Extreme Makeover* studios, hoping for your big break, or you could find one of the many outstanding cosmetic dentists in the Greater Boston area and finally have the smile of your dreams.

Cosmetic dentistry is not just about beautiful smiles. About 75 percent of adults believe that an unattractive smile can hurt your chances for career success. A total of 96 percent believe that an attractive smile makes a person more appealing to the opposite sex. Virtually all adults feel a beautiful smile is an important asset. Yet only half of those surveyed were satisfied with their smile.

Cosmetic dentistry is big business also. Whether it is Crest WhiteStrips®, Lumi-neers®, Invisalign® orthodontics or ZOOM® whitening, it is hard to avoid advertising for whiter, brighter, straighter teeth. Radio, cable TV and internet advertising by individuals and groups of dentists can lead to information overload for the average consumer.

You do not need to go to Beverly Hills or New York City to find some of the most experienced and highly trained cosmetic dentists in the country. They are right in your own backyard. But how do you know what to look for? Let's take a look at some of these questions.

Drive down Beacon Street and every dentist sign now says "Family and Cosmetic Dentistry." Since there is no specialty in cosmet-



ic dentistry, every dentist can claim to be a cosmetic dentist. But you can find someone who has taken the time to master the complicated techniques involved to create the most beautiful smiles. Look for participation in hands-on training programs where dentists treat their own patients under the guidance of experienced faculty. The Las Vegas Institute for Advanced Dental Studies has some of the most rigorous and highly regarded programs from advanced cosmetics. Some dentists have spent hundreds of hours in advanced training to provide the state of the art in cosmetic procedures. Visit www.lvidocs.com. In contrast, dentists spend a total of 14 hours watching slides and videos to become 'certified' to place Lumineers®, one of the most heavily advertised dental products in history.

Your cosmetic dentist should start by carefully examining your teeth, gums, bite and jaw muscles to be sure that the right procedures and materials are selected for your unique situation. Models, photographs and x-rays should be measured and analyzed before the dentist proposes recommended treatment.

Whitening is a safe effective way to brighten up dark and discolored teeth. Professional products will give you the best results with the advantage of dentist supervision. Costs have been falling to the point where affordability is not an issue. Crooked teeth can now be invisibly straightened with Invisalign® orthodontics which are clear removable plastic shells. If your teeth are worn, chipped, slightly crooked or spaced, porcelain veneers are often the best option. Lumineers® can be used if your teeth only need to be made bigger, since they are added to the tooth. The color is painted on the surface so it often wears off over time. The best porcelain veneers can be made to look so natural that you would never notice anything but a magnificent smile. Cos-

metic dentistry can often be completed in just two visits. Invisalign® orthodontics can take as little as three months with more complicated cases lasting a year or more.

Everyone would like to know what the cost will be for their cosmetic dentistry before they start. Expect to budget anywhere from \$2,900 to more than \$6,000 for Invisalign® orthodontics, depending on the complexity of

your case. A complete smile makeover with porcelain veneers can often cost \$8,000 to more than \$12,000, again depending on how many teeth need to be treated and how difficult the procedures will be. ▲

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