

HEALTH

Cosmetic dentistry brings significant improvements

By *Stephen Durham*

CONTRIBUTOR

The link between a person's appear-

ance and well-being is settled, and that link runs both ways. When people feel well they look good, and the better a person's appearance, the better he or she feels.

To go even further,

appearance has a lot to do with how people get along in the world.

Research shows that people are hard-wired to team up with other people who look good. Through generations we've learned to be attracted to folks who appear healthy and capable.

Research also gives us some surprising insights about the impact of your smile.

One study demonstrated that a smile improves a person's attractiveness – to both men and women – more than make-up.

In another study to determine what attracts people to each other, teeth topped the list, more than hair and clothes, more than hands and nails, more than the car the person drives. A bright, strong smile signals good qualities in a way everybody understands.

Over time, teeth and gums face a lot of demanding use. Eventually, for most of us, they show it.

They become darker or even discolored. They wear down and shorten the length of a person's face, sometimes even causing or adding to wrinkles.

Occasionally a tooth or two just goes missing. And over time, conventional amalgam fillings can make our teeth shine in colors and places we probably didn't intend.

Fortunately dentistry has more and better tools to address these issues than ever before.

Cosmetic dentistry can brighten, straighten, add or reduce volume, replace, contour and crown teeth so that just about anybody can have a smile to be proud to show – and show more often.

Restorations are available for fillings, caps and crowns that blend with your teeth in a matching color.

White, bonded fillings fuse very tightly with the existing tooth, so there's less chance of future decay.

And they don't transfer heat and cold the way metal fillings do, so the results are more comfortable as well as more attractive.

Re-contouring teeth to sculpt more attractive edges improves comfort and function, too.

Dental implants replace teeth that are

missing or better off gone. They can transform a person's whole appearance, and now with mini-implants the process can take hours rather than weeks and months.

Whitening your smile is another great way to dial up your appearance and influence.

In just about an hour Zoom whitening gives dazzling results.

Some patients choose an affordable, professional-strength, at-home alternative for whitening, such as the Opalescence whitening system.

Today, patients find that it's really practical to achieve their own best smile, and when they take that step, the positive impact in their lives is even more than they expected.

Dr. Stephen Durham practices at Durham Dental at Town Center in Beaufort. www.DrStephenDurham.com

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