

TEETHING PROBLEMS

Increasing numbers of cosmetic dentists are wising up to the potential of using facial aesthetic techniques in collaboration with cosmetic dental work to achieve a comprehensive appearance change. Movement of the teeth as a patient ages, combined with general wear, can cause the face to droop and worsen the appearance of lines.

The addition of services such as fillers and botulinum toxin to a dentist's treatment menu has not been welcomed by all aesthetic doctors, some of whom feel dentists are not experts in treating the face outside the mouth. The General Dental Council also advises caution, ruling in June 2008 that dentists carrying out such procedures must advertise them separately from their dental offer.

Nevertheless, more dental surgeries are beginning to offer injectables, arguing that often it is only by changing the teeth as well as the skin that optimal anti-ageing impact can be achieved.

"What's inside the mouth influences all the apparatus around it," says Dr Anoop Maini, clinical director of Aqua Dental Spa. "In the ageing process, teeth wear down and

the face starts to collapse, which accentuates lines – particularly nasolabial and perioral lines."

It is widely believed in facial aesthetics that the distance from eyebrow to base of nose should be equal to the space between the base of the nose and the chin, and as

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the teeth wear down that balance can shift making the lower face look squashed.

"Restoring the teeth can have a very powerful effect on the overall face shape, people refer to it as a 'dental facelift'," says Maini. "This can be as simple as restoring crowns

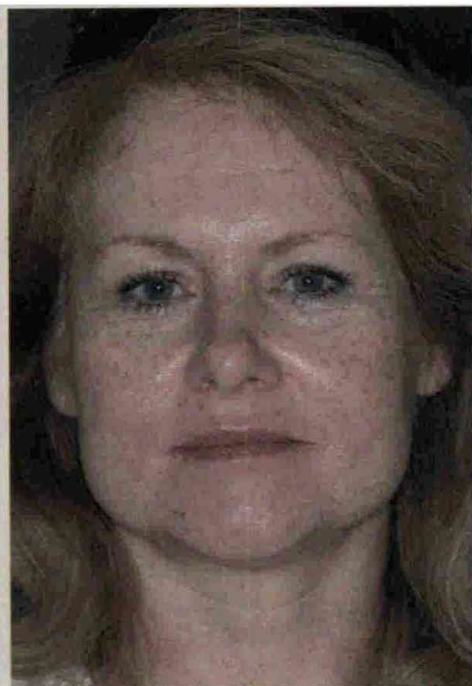
or replacing worn dentures but braces are getting more popular among adults now and realigning teeth can also reshape the face."

However, improving the structure and appearance of the teeth without treating the rest of the face can lead to an unbalanced appearance. For example, teeth restored to the optimum size can look large and unnatural if the top lip has thinned so Maini sometimes advises using fillers in the lip first to plump it out and treat perioral lines.

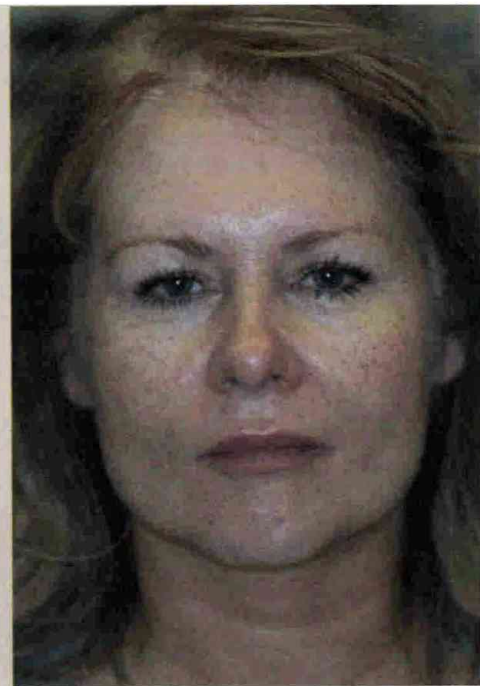
He also uses botulinum toxin to lift the corners of the mouth where they have turned down with age and to correct asymmetry of the smile. "That's particularly important when doing veneers because if you set the teeth perfectly horizontally they can look wonky if the commissural line where the lips meet is not straight. We can correct asymmetry first with botulinum toxin but if a patient doesn't want that I'd make the veneers to follow the commissural line."

Injectables are also being used to balance the faces of younger patients. Grinders, for example, can be treated with botulinum toxin to reduce over developed





BEFORE:
A PATIENT OF DR MAINI'S WHO HAS HYPERTROPHY OF HER MASSETER MUSCLES DUE TO NOCTURNAL TOOTH GRINDING, WHICH IS VERY COMMON



AFTER:
SIX MONTHS LATER, AFTER USING A NIGHT GUARD TO STOP GRINDING, AND RECEIVING SIMULTANEOUS BOTULINUM TOXIN INJECTIONS TO HELP REDUCE MUSCLE SIZE