

The Advantages of High-Tech Dentistry

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Technology has found its way into every corner of our lives. Apple is an excellent example of a corporation that introduces what seems to be an endless array of high-tech products that we include in our daily routines. They package the technology in a way that creates benefits for the owner and makes it simple to use. The dental profession also has corporations that offer advanced technologies that help to enrich the patient's dental health and office experience. Here is a review of the latest options to know about.

DIGITAL RADIOGRAPHY

This is fast becoming the norm in most dental offices. Sensors for taking digital X-rays have a much higher sensitivity level than the traditional X-ray film. The patient benefits because radiation exposure is down by a remarkable 80 percent. The dentist benefits because he can see the X-ray instantly. The environment also benefits because there are no toxic chemicals that are required for developing film. The cost of the system is a deterrent, but once invested, it pays off every day it is used.

TMJ (JAW JOINT) DISEASE

This disease strikes millions. The latest studies on the disease encouraged the development of the NTI (Nociceptive Trigeminal Inhibition), which is FDA-approved. The NTI is a small mouth guard that takes advantage of a protective mechanism that your body has for teeth. When we bite down hard on our back teeth, the large muscles near our temples bulge and contract to their maximum for chewing and grinding. When just your front teeth are touching, these muscles can only generate about 10 percent of their maximum force. The NTI mouth guard uses your body's protective

mechanism to help reduce the forces on the TMJ during sleep, giving millions relief from their TMJ symptoms.

HIGH-TECH PORCELAIN

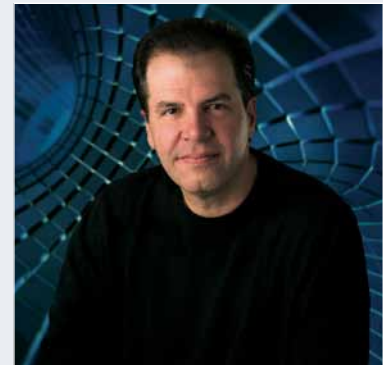
Lithium Disilicate is the newest porcelain product available for the fabrication of crowns and veneers. Its high strength coupled with its translucency has made it the material of choice for dentists looking to create an undetectable restoration. It does not require a metallic base like the traditional crowns did. This eliminates that dark gray line that so many patients see at the gum line. It also allows for light to transmit completely through the tooth, which makes the crown or veneer virtually undetectable.

LIGHTING

In the past, dentists relied on the light that hung over the dental chair in order to light up the patient's mouth. The reason the light had handles on it is because it always needed to be adjusted in order to illuminate the area the dentist was trying to see. High intensity discharge (HID) lamps are the latest technology to come to the dental field and eliminate this problem. This lighting became popular in luxury automobiles more than 10 years ago. Advances have made it small and light enough so that the dentist can have it attached to his glasses. This helps reduce the stress on the dentist and shorten appointments for the patient.

IMAGING SOFTWARE

Dentistry has evolved from a need-based to a want-based service. Now more than ever, patients are asking for treatment that can change the appearance of their smile. The patient has an idea as to what they want their smile to look like, but cannot always put it into dental terms. The



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latest dental imaging software allows the dentist to take pictures and perform virtual dentistry so that he can show the patient what to expect. Whitening, closing spaces, fixing chips, and changing size and shape can all be performed in the virtual world so that the patient and dentist can discuss the final treatment. Once the virtual dentistry is approved, it can be sent along to the dental technician as a guideline so that there will be no surprises with the final smile.

Technology will continue to find its way into every corner of dentistry offering great results. Patients and dentists will both have better esthetic results, shorter treatment times, and greater predictability.

If one or more of these symptoms are present, contact your dental health professional for a consultation.

- Do you have a crown that appears gray at the gum line?
- Do you wake up with a headache or neck ache?
- Do you have a porcelain veneer or crown that keeps breaking?
- Have you had cosmetic work that did not turn out the way you expected?

For a consultation on these concerns, or for a general check-up, contact:

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