

WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND

From time to time we all need to revisit our dental practices as to the services we are offering and to think about changes and improvements in those same services. Times change and certainly dental technology and materials have changed over the past 30 years, and they continue to change. What was true a few years ago can now be completely different in the advent of new materials that have been introduced into the marketplace. This is certainly true in the entire arena of no and minimal preparation veneers. There have recently been some major advancements that are very exciting.

A few short years ago, Lumineers by Den Mat Holdings LLC exploded into the marketplace with direct consumer advertising about a product that had been around for about 25 years. This once again popularized the concept of no preparation veneers, with consumers knocking on dentists' doors for this concept. There was a backlash in the dental community with many dental laboratories then saying that no preparation was no good and did not work. Certainly, it seems that the truth has changed because it is now hard to find a dental laboratory that does not offer some kind of no/minimal preparation veneer. You now have a whole myriad of no preparation veneer options, including Glidewell's Vivaneers, Arrowhead's Razor Thin Veneers, and many others.

The biggest complaints about no preparation veneers were that they were too bulky and too opaque. The patient may have been satisfied with the esthetics, but the dentist wasn't thrilled with the opacity or the bulkiness of the veneers. While it is true that when the patient is satisfied, the case can be considered successful, we also need to feel good about what we are providing the patient. Sometimes these problems would be related to the dentist's improper case selection and other times it is the laboratory's use of the wrong kind of porcelain being used for this technique. A no/minimal preparation veneer is a specialized veneer technique, thereby requiring specialized porcelain. To be successful, you need a porcelain that can be fabricated very thin and still be strong enough to withstand the pressures of being seated on the tooth. A veneer can be made .3 mm thin with many porcelains but, as many dentists have experienced, when the laboratory is using the same porcelain that they use for crown and bridge, they hear this annoying breakage sound as they seat the veneer. Indeed, I've had some

thin veneers from laboratories using the wrong porcelain break in the shipping box!

There have now been dental laboratories that have developed more specialized porcelain that are thinner and stronger than ever before specifically for this technique. Aurum Ceramic Laboratories, which is a preferred laboratory at LVI, has been known for their high esthetic quality. They now use one of the most beautiful porcelains ever developed specifically just for the no/minimal preparation technique. Aurum's Cristal Veneers have been a wonderful addition to a dentist's armamentarium in the no/minimal preparation veneer category. You can now have these veneers made with high-level esthetics never seen before in this category. This has been a major advancement in no preparation veneers that will highly satisfy the esthetic demands of the patient and also the dentist.

From the practice management side of no/minimal preparation veneers, certainly the economy has made us all take a step back in some of these esthetic services. The big advantage with no/minimal preparation veneers is that there is much less time involvement, they can be more reasonably priced than other veneers, and it is minimally invasive. In addition, it is wise to package together other esthetic services with a veneer case. We routinely now include bleaching and some Botox and dermal filler therapy in the total case price to achieve maximum facial esthetics surrounding our veneers.

With the advancements of new materials and techniques, these veneers are more easily accepted by patients because of their conservative nature. With the advent of esthetic porcelains designed just for this technique, now, 30 years later, no/minimal preparation veneers are here to stay. They should be a part of every dentist's armamentarium.

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