

# THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DOCTOR –PATIENT RELATIONSHIP

**T**he more educated patients are about modern day dentistry, the more satisfied they will be with their treatment decisions and results. It is essential for the patient to know their options and have clear communications with their dentist. After all, it is their teeth, money and emotions that are involved. If communication is not open, the patient may not be happy with their treatment or final outcome.



Photo by Dr. Pamela Marzban

For the sake of this article, let's call the patient in the picture Lisa. Lisa came in very frustrated because through the years she had spent a lot of time and money on her oral health. While her mouth was mostly healthy, she felt horrible about her smile. She was reluctant to finish her remaining treatment because anytime she had work done; she felt that her smile looked worse and not better. When she smiled, she felt like her mouth was screaming "Look at my blue teeth and my chalky crowns". She hid her smile, which is a shame, especially with today's technology.

Even though her mismatched crowns and dark fillings were functional, they were completed with older techniques and were done without involving Lisa in the decision-making process as to material, color and shape.

Combining today's technology, along with good communication between doctor and patient, would have resulted in an equally functional, yet esthetic outcome. Of course, this holds true not to just dentistry, but to all doctor and patient relationships.

## PATIENT'S ROLE

There are times when fillings and/or crowns are needed. If the patient wants a good, predictable outcome, they need to express their wants from the very beginning. In other words, the patient needs to see what fillings look like before they are done or what their crowns/veneers will look like before they are cemented. If they do not like what they see, they need to

express their opinion.

## DOCTOR'S ROLE

The first thing a doctor should do is to listen and find out what a patient wants. The second is to use the latest technology and up to date advanced training to be able to offer options specifically tailored for that patient after a thorough and complete examination is done.

In Lisa's case, a concerned dentist would have pointed out the potential problem of her new crowns not looking like her natural teeth or offered her filling options that look natural. With proper information, there are excellent dental labs that can do

a much better job of matching restorations to natural teeth.

**If your doctor doesn't take the time to talk with you about care and treatment options and possible concerns, it is time to start looking for a new doctor.**



*Dr. Pamela Marzban is a dentist in practice in Fairfax County. If you have dental questions you can call her at 703-520-2426 or visit her at [www.marzbandds.com](http://www.marzbandds.com)*