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Conceptual Paper

# Lip Enhancement at the Dental Office

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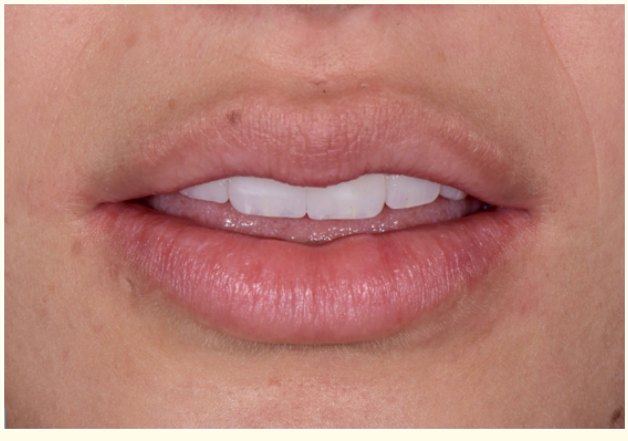

***Figure 1***

What would our patients say if we told them that they could have significantly fuller and more beautiful lips without undergoing a painful aesthetic procedure, without needles, incisions or grafts and that at the same time their teeth will look more attractive as a result of the same painless and effective procedure; It's our mission as dentist who practice cosmetic dentistry on a daily basis to remind patients that in the same procedure they can gain lip volume and improve the aesthetics of their lips thereby avoiding the secondary negative effects to their smile with additional procedures.

## How does it work?

The methods of lip enhancement work with the same basic principles as many other cosmetic treatments. The lower structure is increased to change the appearance of the surface. Naturally the teeth give support to the lips; in a restorative procedure, increasing only microns to middle and incisal thirds of the central and lateral incisors would project the lips significantly, making them to look fuller and with more volume.

A lip improvement can make a subtle or profound difference, depending on how much the teeth change. A restorative dentist will be able to control the amount of enhancement to produce thicker lips, without over-generating dental contours; Following the minimally invasive dentistry protocols, where the wear of the natural tooth will be minimal or nil and on the critical and epicritical surfaces, such as the marginal terminations and integrity margins will not be structurally or negatively affected by restoration structure, nor by any cementing material.

## How is lip enhancement done?

It can be done in three ways: 1. By changing shape of the buccal dental arch of the teeth through orthodontics, this procedure will take a relatively long time, but depending on the case it may be the most appropriate. 2. Changing the shape of incisors with restorative treatments such as ceramic contact lenses and ceramic veneers. 3. Complete oral rehabilitation for full mouth restorations.

For this reason, dentists often suggest making ceramic veneers or lenses unless the tooth has large structural loss. In some cases, the combination of crowns, veneers and lenses is necessary to obtain the best results. Both the crowns and the lamellae can make the teeth look more harmonic, restore darkened teeth to their natural white color and at the same time provide better lip support. Naturally thin or age-thinned lips can be complemented with these restorative procedures creating lips with more volume and better appearance.

## How long it last?

When choosing a method of lip enhancement through oral rehabilitation, you must take into account the fact that some procedures are semi-permanent, and others only last for very short time. The orthodontic alteration is nearly permanent. The crowns and the ceramic lamellae can last between eight and fifteen years,

depending on a great variety of factors. In most cases, these can be replaced. I should mention polymeric veneers, which are generally transient are however not recommended for cases of aesthetic restorations that involve lip enhancement.

If we compare combined treatments to improve the harmonic and dental appearance along with the volumetric enhancement of lips, I must emphasize that improvement of lips with dermal fillers by injection of collagen or hyaluronic acid generally last three to six months. In addition, there are some adverse side effects, sometimes irreversible such as deformation of the vermilion of the lips, activation of the herpes simplex virus, formation of nodules, granulomas, migration of product to other areas of the face, cutaneous necrosis and asymmetries among others.

We dentist who work on behalf of oral health also base our work on the architecture, beauty and dental harmony of the mouth of which the lips are the frame. Therefore, we must seek safe and effective methods that minimize adverse effects to improve the aesthetics of the lower third of the visage our patients.

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