



CRAIGENTINNY  
DENTAL CARE

Free Cosmetic Dentistry Report

## Top Tips When Thinking About Improving Your Smile



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# Don't Make These Mistakes With Your Smile

We all want to look our best and realise that now more than ever that a great smile can help us to get on in life and feel better about ourselves. Over the last 25 years we have helped many thousands of patients to improve the appearance of their smile.

We believe that dental health comes first and does not need to stand in the way of a great smile. So please enjoy reading about the 9 mistakes commonly made when people think about cosmetic dentistry. More importantly we hope our tips and advice help you to find the right way forwards for your own dental health and smile.

On television we frequently see very dramatic smile makeovers, often with equally dramatic price tags. It makes for Great TV but does little to inform you about real life cosmetic dentistry. Makeover shows often focus on doing things fast, in order to produce quick results significant amounts of healthy tooth can often be drilled away. Ultimately this can be harmful in the long run.



There are real alternatives to traditional cosmetic dentistry, which can produce beautiful results, often with less tooth removal, lower costs and less risk of long term harm. So please enjoy this info pack where we will share with you the 9 mistakes to avoid with your smile.

## Mistake 1 Assuming that the treatment will last for ever

Sadly not true, the only permanent treatment is an extraction definitely something to be avoided! So how long will your cosmetic treatment last? It is actually very difficult to predict the life expectancy of any dental treatment let alone cosmetic dentistry. A lot will depend on



things that your dentist can do such as assessing how your bite works, and making sure that conditions inside your mouth are right for cosmetic dental treatment. How you look after it and are helped to look after it is equally important.

Let's assume that your new porcelain veneers using a lot of tooth drilling are exceptionally well done and are going to last for 7-10 years. How many times will these have to be replaced in your lifetime and what will the total cost of this be over the next 30 40 or 50 years?

**Solution** – look for cosmetic treatments that are kind to teeth, that involve as little drilling or preferably no drilling away of teeth. Look for materials that can be repaired invisibly or made as “good as new” to extend their lifespan.

**Tip** – ask your dentist what “guarantees he / she will provide” after placing your new veneers, crowns or other treatments.

## Mistake 2 Ignoring the most obvious solution

Very often we have been asked to help patients get whiter teeth by placing veneers. As a starting point we usually recommend a tooth whitening procedure. When done professionally it is a safe and effective process. There are some whitening agents that can bleach or burn the gums too so it is important that these are avoided. Over the counter bleaching systems will not achieve the same results as a professional system. For best results your whitening trays must be custom made to fit your mouth exactly.



Not all tooth whitening providers are created equal. At present it is illegal in the UK for anyone who is not a dentist to carry out tooth whitening. This makes it very difficult for you to gain redress should an inexperienced operator make a mistake. Dentists are registered with the General Dental Council who are there to protect patients they also carry professional insurance for your benefit, giving you peace of mind that your treatment will be both safe and effective.

***Tip- Do not ever whiten your teeth using products containing Chlorine Dioxide. It is very acidic and can permanently damage the teeth, leaving them sensitive and appearing more discoloured.***

## Mistake 3 Ignoring the orthodontist

Many of us want straighter teeth and look at porcelain veneers as the fastest way to achieve this. The downside is that to make the teeth line up evenly it is sometimes necessary to drill away a lot of one particular tooth. Very often a similar result can be achieved with orthodontics i.e. moving the teeth to a better position. Adults tend not to want to wear braces that look like train tracks but did you know that using the Invisalign system the braces can be almost invisible. Also a combination of a little orthodontic treatment plus veneers can often produce results in a short space of time but with less damage to the teeth.



Braces no longer have to look like this.

We often think that orthodontic treatment takes months or even years however techniques like the Inman Aligner or Six Month Smiles can improve your smile much more rapidly than ever before. Inman Aligners can correct simple problems in as little as 12-18 weeks. For more complex situations 6 Month Smiles can still create a great improvement in around a quarter of the time that you might have expected in the past.

***Tip – if you have orthodontic treatment ask about “retention” or what will be done to hold the teeth in their final position long term. Any teeth that have been moved orthodontically must be retained in their new position long term to prevent relapse.***

## Mistake 4 What I have seen on TV must be best for Me

A veneer is something that is bonded to the front of a tooth to make it look more pleasing. A Crown is fitted right over the top of a tooth that has been drilled down in size. They are used a lot in makeover shows on TV. But did you know that there are different types of veneer? Traditional porcelain veneers of the sort you see on television, are made in a laboratory, so the dentist needs to drill the teeth to prepare them, then make temporary veneers for you to wear while the final ones are being made.



To make sure the porcelain is thick enough to avoid breaking at least ½ a millimetre of tooth usually needs to be drilled away. If your tooth sticks out of alignment, which is probably why you are having veneers in the first place, then this can be even more. Some dentists also aim to remove a whole millimetre at the tip of the tooth as well, to allow enough thickness for the porcelain to look its best. Be aware that if you drill away a substantial amount of any tooth there is a 5-15% chance that the tooth will require root treatment in future.

There are still some situations where a porcelain veneer is a better option than anything else but be sure to ask about all of your options.

***Tip – if you are having veneers, consider having the teeth pre aligned with orthodontics to reduce the amount of tooth that needs to be drilled away.***

## Mistake 5 Thinking that all veneers are the same

An alternative to porcelain veneers are composite veneers, these are built directly on to your tooth by the dentist. This means that after the planning stage, treatment can often be completed in a single visit. The material also does not require so much tooth removal as it can be used in very thin sections. In many cases no drilling away of the natural tooth is required at all. Additionally if the veneer does eventually chip or your gums recede it is easy to repair it with more of the same material. If a traditional veneer breaks it has to be re made entirely which is a costly process. Composite veneers require less or no tooth drilling and so can often be placed without the need for an injection. They are also less likely to causing nerve death in a tooth. Finally they are around half the price of porcelain veneers.

***Tip – resin bonded veneers are a great “tooth friendly” solution for most patients and a real alternative to porcelain veneers.***

***Tip 2 - resin bonding is best avoided in smokers as cigarette smoke has been shown to discolour the material over time .***

## Mistake 6 Not addressing your uncertainty before starting

Many patients are concerned as to how they might look before treatment. It is usually possible for the dentist to preview changes to your smile for you, using photos, models of your teeth and occasionally by temporarily placing material direct on to your teeth. Any cosmetic treatment it is a big commitment and it is important that you feel right about things before you actually start. If you are not sure then don't rush things, take your time and be certain of what you are looking to achieve.

**Tip – dentists who are interested in this type of work will be happy to discuss things in lots of detail with you. They should also be able to show you a good selection of before and after photographs of similar treatments to your own.**

## Mistake 7 Not aiming for the least amount of treatment

There are parts of your tooth where the outer layer ( which contains no nerves ) is very thick and can be adjusted without a problem. The process is called smile sculpting and can even be done without anaesthetic. Very often sculpting plus tooth whitening is enough to rejuvenate a worn or older smile to restore a more youthful appearance. No veneers or crowns or injections required!

**Tip – as a starting point we often suggest a simple tooth whitening and a re sculpting process, you can always choose to look at more complex options later.**

## Mistake 8 Looking under your lip!

Sounds strange, but unless you use orthodontic treatment to straighten the teeth then cosmetic dentistry is trying to create an illusion for you. That illusion is that your teeth are as close to perfect as possible. So by using crowns or veneers, be they resin bonded or porcelain the aim is for them to look great at social distance which is 2-3 feet away. When we look at changes to our teeth we tend to get close-up to the mirror pull our lips back and then try to see if we like it. The truth is that we don't usually walk down the street with our lips pulled back!

So it is not the best way assess changes to our smile. Although it sounds like crazy behaviour, I promise....you will do the same, it is just human nature. The best way to judge is by looking at a mirror at arms length or better still a photograph. This lets you see what others see when they talk to you.



## Mistake 9 Ignoring tooth decay and gum disease

We all want to get to the to bit that makes us look better as soon as possible in treatment . However ignoring tooth decay and gm disease elsewhere in the mouth is like fitting a new kitchen when you have rising damp. It will look good for a short while then deteriorate rapidly. Cosmetic dentistry should only be carried out in a healthy mouth. This will make sure that it looks great and last for as long as possible.

***Tip – a good dentist will see securing the long term health of your mouth as the single most important step in achieving a long lasting great looking smile makeover.***

**Any questions we'd love to hear them, e-mail us direct at [office@craigentinny.co.uk](mailto:office@craigentinny.co.uk)**

## Our 10 Tips For A Fantastic Smile Makeover

1. Try to work out what you don't like about your smile and tell the dentist as clearly as possible. If you need help just e-mail us and ask for our DIY smile assessment questionnaire.
2. Try to have the least amount of cosmetic work done to achieve the desired end result. Very often, whitening alone improves a smile so much that patients are happy to stop there.
3. Consider recontouring, small adjustments can reinvigorate a worn smile far more than you could ever imagine.
4. If you are having veneers, think very long term. Weigh up whether porcelain or composite is right for you. Your dentist can help you to work out which option is best.
5. Don't go ahead with any treatment unless you are totally convinced it is right for you. There is always tomorrow so don't rush things.
6. Ask your dentist if it is possible to preview your smile makeover. They should be happy to help. Ask to see examples of other cases that the dentist has completed personally. An experienced dentist will have a library of these.
7. Ask take a friend along to your fitting appointment, it often helps to have someone who knows you well to look at the results and offer their feedback.
8. For your own peace of mind ask about guarantees on the completed treatment. The Craigentenny Dental health Centre guarantees extend between 3 and 5 years on cosmetic treatments.
9. After you have your new smile, keep it looking fabulous and in tip top shape with regular preventive visits to your dentist and hygienist.
10. SMILE – it makes us all feel happier

## What Next?

If you are thinking about having some cosmetic dentistry carried out we would love to hear from you. Our award winning team are experienced in carrying out both simple and extensive cosmetic dental procedures.

Our dentists were among the first in Scotland to become trained to provide Inman Aligners, and have been providing successful tooth friendly cosmetic dentistry for the last 20 years.



All of our senior dentists hold qualifications in addition to their basic dental qualifications and would love to help you achieve the smile that you have always wanted.



## To get started

Drop us an e-mail to [office@craigentenny.co.uk](mailto:office@craigentenny.co.uk)  
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