



G57 Restoring Smiles for Victims of Domestic Violence

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After attending this presentation, attendees will understand the effectiveness by which victims of domestic violence can recover their smiles.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by providing resources to victims of domestic violence on how to restore their smiles in the most effective and economical way possible.

This presentation demonstrates an immediate solution to victims' problems when teeth are broken and lost as a result of domestic violence or assault. Assault victims frequently present with facial injuries, including trauma to the oral cavity and teeth. Loss of teeth results in not only physical and emotional trauma, but loss of integrity and confidence as well. Confidence is closely tied to the ability to speak and smile, both of which are severely affected by damage and loss of teeth.

Initial patient examination includes review of chief complaint, history of present illness, and imaging studies (panoramic X-ray, clinical photos, etc.), followed by physical examination and establishing diagnosis. First aid is given if necessary.

The following is a description of how effectively dentists and on-site laboratory technicians can work together in restoring the smile of an assault victim in a matter of few hours.

Alginate impressions are taken, poured up, and bite registration is completed. If broken, unrestorable teeth are present, these are ground off of the model, and a clear surgical stent is fabricated, then set aside for surgery. The models are trimmed and articulated with bite verification while the patient is in the chair. The mold and shade of new denture teeth are selected chair-side for the patient. These newly selected denture teeth are now set in wax on the models and wax try-in completed verifying proper esthetics, phonetics, and function with the patient. After the patient and dentist approve the setup of the teeth, the waxed denture borders are warmed up in preparation for border molding. A final impression is then made of the border-molded, waxed denture. Next, the impression is poured up and the dentures are immediately flasked and processed with a hydrocolloid processing technique, then trimmed and polished for delivery.

At the same time, the patient is locally anesthetized with 2% lidocaine and 1:100,000 epinephrine using a painless injection technique for extractions of broken and unrestorable teeth, as well as an alveoloplasty procedure or any other required preprosthetic surgery; unrestorable teeth are then extracted. A surgical stent is used during alveoloplasty, sutures are placed, and dentures are placed immediately. Patients leave smiling, often crying from happiness and excitement, and with regained confidence!

The technique described here can be used as a removable partial denture, implant retained partial denture, or full denture fabrication. If dental trauma is less severe and teeth are restorable, operative dentistry or fixed prosthodontics should be used. The key is to provide an immediate solution for the victim in order to restore their confidence and their smile!

Violence, Abuse, Smile