

Smile aesthetics and occlusion: A controversial topic in dentistry



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_Cosmetic dentists around the world routinely perform various diagnostic and therapeutic procedures that involve occlusion (fillings, crowns, bridges, removable prostheses, implant-supported restorations, full mouth rehabilitation and orthodontics). Aesthetics is related to human perception, desires and personality, and is basically guided by social trends, while occlusion is related to forces and entails the relation between the maxillary and mandibular teeth when they are in contact and the masticatory system's response to the forces generated by the new position of the teeth. Smile aesthetics and occlusion has been, and is still to some extent, controversial, as there are numerous questions related to smile and occlusion that have not been answered with scientific certainty and there are many diverse and polarised opinions regarding this.

In their undergraduate education, dental students are not fully trained in the science and art of both smile aesthetics and occlusion. When these new graduates enter into clinical practice and begin undertaking complex clinical cases, many become confused with the numerous theoretical recommendations and varied concepts about cosmetic dentistry and occlusion in academic and clinical dentistry. In order to understand the core relationship between smile aesthetics (macro, mini and micro) and occlusion (masticatory force management), a clinician must be familiar with the pros and cons of all the popular concepts and theories regarding smile aesthetics and occlusion, and based on this select the most conservative treatment that is best suited to the patient and that will ensure health and function.

With this in mind, two global educational academies, namely Minimally Invasive Cosmetic Dentistry (www.micdglobalacademy.com), or MiCD, and Teeth, Muscles, Joints and Airway Harmony (www.tmjaharmony.com), or TMJA, have been established with the aim of promoting healthy, comprehensive dentistry by disseminating the relevant knowledge and information regarding various concepts, theories and clinical protocols concerning smile aesthetics and occlusion.

I am pleased to mention here that recently the Faculty of Dentistry of Thammasat University in Thailand and the Vedic Institute of Smile Aesthetics in Nepal, along with three supporting partners (SHOFU Dental Asia-Pacific in Singapore, Tekscan in the USA, and Bio-Research Associates in the USA), signed a memorandum of understanding to establish the MiCD and TMJA Harmony International Training and Treatment Center at the Faculty of Dentistry of Thammasat University. This centre will coordinate with various like-minded clinicians, academics and researchers working in the field of cosmetic dentistry and offer structured, skill-based training in MiCD and TMJA harmony dentistry especially for dentists in the Asia Pacific region.

In this year's third issue of **cosmetic dentistry**, we have included various clinical articles, from simple cosmetic restorations to complicated implant treatment. I hope you will enjoy reading this issue.

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