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PERIODONTICS

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Q: With treatments requiring an artistic, subjective touch, how can patients feel confident in putting their trust in a dental specialist?

A: Periodontal specialists are trained in advanced surgical techniques and also to analyze the literature so we can appropriately implement theories and procedures into our practices. This allows us to maximize patient outcomes and create more predictable results. I make a point of presenting previous cases, along with photographs and other visual aids, which help patients understand and envision realistic results.

Q: What does a good relationship with a periodontist provide patients, and how can patients cultivate one with their own dentist or dental specialist?

A: A good relationship with a periodontist provides the most important thing: good oral and periodontal health. For patients who have oral disease and/or chronic systemic disease, a periodontist should be part of the patient's healthcare team to ensure oral health and achieve optimal systemic health. The best way to cultivate this relationship is to be open and honest with one's expectations, follow the recommendations prescribed to you, and ask lots of questions.

Q: With treatments that affect the appearance of a person's smile, how can patients have certainty that they will achieve what they're looking for?

A: Discussing realistic expectations as to what can be achieved ensures that the treatment outcome will be successful. As part of this communication process, verbal dialogue, sketches, clinical photos and other visual aids are extremely beneficial in helping patients realize what can be accomplished. I am fortunate to have an artistic and visual attentiveness that aids me in envisioning the end result. I work backwards from there to attain optimal outcomes. This also helps me communicate realistic expectations to patients; which, along with artistic precision, allows me to accomplish predictable long-term results.

Q: Have you seen patients' lives changed with a new smile?

A: Time and time again. For me, it's the most rewarding part of being a periodontist. I rebuild smiles on a daily basis by replacing teeth with dental implants, rebuilding gum tissue or treating periodontal diseases. Patients are amazed by how natural their teeth and gums look or how much better their mouth feels and functions after treatment. The impact that periodontal and reconstructive treatments have on their lives can be dramatic and as patients regain self-confidence, it can be emotional as well.