



The hype surrounding veneers isn't showing signs of slowing down any time soon, as demonstrated by the thousands of perfect smiles displayed on Instagram attributed to one cosmetic dentist or other, but with prices still not that accessible, and the slightly unnerving reality that teeth need to be (irreversibly) filed down to fit them; are there other ways to achieve the smile of your dreams? Dr Maysoon Abdelmajeed of Dr Michael's Jumeirah clinic says there is, and while she agrees that they are a great option for some candidates, for others they simply aren't necessary.

"Veneers are a very quick option for people who are unhappy about the appearance of their teeth, as they can achieve a whiter, straighter and more proportional smile in a very short time frame," she says, however she cautions against making the decision to invest in them too quickly, without doing your research and exploring other options. "Not everyone is a good candidate for veneers, even though many dentists in this region will offer it regardless. The disadvantage of veneers is that usually some of the enamel has to be removed from the front surfaces of the teeth to make space for them to be placed on top.

Even though this amount can be kept to a minimum, it can vary from case to case. For example, the more crowded your teeth are, the more tooth structure has to be removed from your teeth, which can cause problems in the future such as pain and sensitivity."

With the current cost of veneers in the region of Dhs700 and Dhs9,000 per tooth they are not a cheap option, and while most are guaranteed to last for ten years there are of course exceptions, sometimes they de-bond or crack, which can be more costly in the long run.

"Over the years, it has become apparent that removing considerable amounts of healthy tooth structure in order to place veneers put teeth at severe risk of dying. Patients that have had their teeth cut down 20 or so years ago to stick porcelain on, are now reappearing to have these teeth root-treated or removed as they have lost vitality."

the perfect SMILE

Veneers are ever increasing in popularity, but are they really the best option? Not necessarily, says Dr Maysoon Abdelmajeed

As for the innovation in technology and materials, Dr Abdelmajeed says that there is currently a shift towards a more organic approach being adopted. "We're now beginning to see a reversal in philosophies about cutting teeth and adding dental materials. We have realised that there is no stronger or more healthy material than what the body naturally creates."

If not veneers, then how can you create a perfect smile? "Orthodontic treatment is an excellent alternative," explains Dr Abdelmajeed, who is a member of both the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh and of the British Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry, and is certified in performing laser dentistry by the British Institute of Laser Dentistry (BILD). "In fact, it is the most ideal option for patients whose main concern is crowded teeth as it's a more conservative treatment," she says. But where veneers are often used as a quick fix for an overcrowded smile, now braces can offer a natural solution within not such a painstaking time frame, it just requires a little bit more patience – "anywhere between three months to a year, sometimes a bit more, depending on the individual's teeth." And if you are worried about looking like the high school geek, braces have come a long way. "Nowadays, there are various options other than metallic fixed braces such as the Inman Aligner, clear aligners, white fixed braces and completely hidden braces placed behind the teeth," explains Dr Abdelmajeed, "I have treated photographers, lawyers, bankers and flight attendants orthodontically and they are over the moon with their new smile." Once the braces are off and teeth perfectly aligned, whitening and cosmetic bonding can be undertaken to correct any small imperfections and reveal a naturally perfect smile.

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