

Investing in Injectables

How BOTOX and Dermal Fillers Can Increase Profitability

Many general dentists have a “teeth-centric” philosophy when it comes to esthetic treatment plans. And, although bleaching and veneers are important and fashionable, they don’t make up the whole package of total facial esthetics.

A beautiful smile is not just about the teeth. It’s about the hard and soft tissue of the mouth, as well as the extraoral soft tissue, including the lips, cheeks, nasolabial folds, marionette lines, chin, and jowls.

When it comes to esthetic procedures, BOTOX® therapy is No. 1 in the world. Most patients are familiar with it, along with popular dermal fillers such as JUVÉDERM® and Restylane.® After all, in nearly every issue of *People* magazine, you can find stars who have received BOTOX and dermal filler injections—along with whitening and veneers—to improve their looks and smile. However, when dentists introduce injectables into their practices, patients’ reactions still vary.

I routinely tell dentists to add this question to their medical history form: “Have you ever had BOTOX or dermal fillers?” You will be amazed at the number of patients who say yes.

BOTOX and dermal filler therapy are now well-established within the dentist’s scope of practice; these procedures also have several useful applications in dentistry, including facial esthetics, frontline orofacial pain therapy, bruxism treatment, and dental sleep medicine. Let’s consider the benefits of adding these services to your practice.

Getting started

Why is facial injectable therapy the fastest-growing area of dentistry? Many dentists simply do the math and realize they will come out ahead if they start providing BOTOX and dermal fillers in their offices. There is no big capital equipment to buy and no monthly lease payment, and the more procedures you do, the more your production will increase.

Plus, the accessory items needed to deliver these products are not expensive. The biggest cost is the actual pharmaceutical agents, and you don’t need to have a large inventory of these products in your office because the companies can ship them to you overnight.

You will need to make one major investment, but it’s in something that will serve you for the rest of your career: a new skill set. In order to provide BOTOX and dermal filler therapy in your office, you need to be trained. You wouldn’t just watch a DVD and start performing implants or sinus lifts; injectable procedures aren’t any different. They require hands-on instruction; live patient training; and a thorough understanding of the pharmaceuticals used, the anatomy you are treating, and what you are trying to accomplish.

Live patient training courses—which are now regularly presented at many major dental meetings—cover all of the necessary clinical knowledge, including anatomy, physiology, psychology, and the prevention and treatment of adverse reactions. Many course participants are often amazed to learn that the actual BOTOX procedure takes about 5 minutes or less! After proper training, dermal filler procedures take about 10 to 15 minutes.

Once you are well-trained and have completed just a few cases, it is incredible how many procedures you can then perform during the course of a week. Do you have the chair capacity for a highly profitable, 5-minute procedure during your busy day? I would suspect that most dentists would say yes.

Moving forward

You may be wondering: Will patients pay for facial esthetic and orofacial pain treatment? In my practice, I’ve encountered many patients who won’t spend money on restorative procedures for their teeth but are willing to pay for minimally invasive facial esthetic treatment. It’s not unusual for dentists and patients to have different opinions regarding which procedures are essential for



Louis Malcmacher, DDS, MAGD, demonstrates proper diagnosis and treatment planning for facial injectables.

overall esthetics and well-being, and it's up to patients to decide where they spend their health care dollars. Once we have the patient in our office for facial esthetics or orofacial pain treatment, however, there is a much greater likelihood they also will invest in much-needed dental procedures.

Dentists are the only health care professionals who can practice total facial esthetics because we are the only ones who can treat the teeth in addition to providing BOTOX and dermal filler therapy in the oral and maxillofacial areas. As a result, dental offices have a unique opportunity to package facial esthetic services with dental services—which is a highly successful combination. It is not unusual for patients to go ahead with bleaching and BOTOX, veneers and BOTOX, implants and dermal fillers, or many other combinations.

If you are considering adding BOTOX and dermal filler therapy treatments in your office, there are a number of ways to establish patient fees. You can set fees based on how much of the actual products are used or which areas of the face are treated. You also could set an overall treatment fee for total facial esthetics, including a smile makeover.

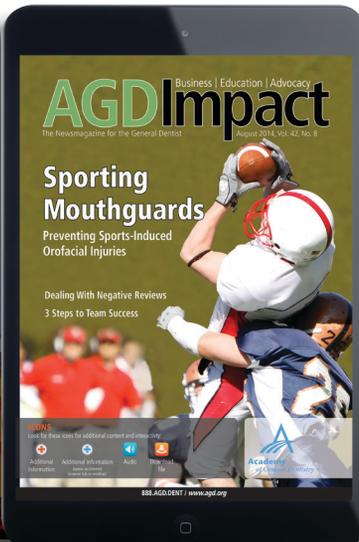
Depending on how much material is used, how many areas are treated, and whether any soft tissue enhancement is accomplished, patient fees for BOTOX and dermal filler

therapy generally range from \$800 to \$3,000 (in addition to any dental treatment fees). If we estimate the procedure time to be anywhere from 5 to 20 minutes and the material cost to range from \$100 to \$700, you can quickly see how profitable these procedures are, especially in light of the short time needed to perform them.

Interest in facial esthetic treatments is growing, and if you only provide basic dental services, it won't be too long before you fall behind. It is time to expand your practice with BOTOX and dermal filler therapy. With so many other health care professionals already performing these procedures, it is about time for dentists to realize that we are equally, or even more, skilled in the facial areas. Ultimately, it is our patients who will benefit by receiving comprehensive treatment from the dentists they trust. ♦



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