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FEBRUARY 2003

AGELESS BEAUTY

77 NO-FAIL PRODUCTS
FOR SILKIER HAIR,
SMOOTHER SKIN,
WHITER TEETH

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THAN EVER
NEW ADVICE FROM A
TOP IMMUNITY EXPERT

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GOES GLAM
THE TOP LOOKS,
THE BEST BUYS

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THE AGONY, THE ECSTASY,
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TO SIZE 16 AND BACK
MY LOVE-HATE AFFAIR
WITH DIETING AND FOOD

SALLY
TAKES A
CHANCE
AND
WINS
BIG

ALPHA WOMEN WHAT'S UP WITH
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Vital & Vibrant

FEELING HEALTHY IN
BODY AND MIND
EDITED BY
COURTENAY SMITH

THIS MONTH: 4 WAYS TO A GREAT SMILE + SUPERCHARGE YOUR IMMUNITY + HEALTH REPORT



Saving your SMILE

Can these procedures
rescue your pearly
whites from the wear
and tear of aging?

BY LUCINDA CHRISS

A couple of years ago, I had my teeth bleached and porcelain veneers bonded to my front teeth. Even though I was spending more than \$5,000, I didn't expect a big transformation. But compliments like, "You're looking really good," soon followed.

Midlifers are fueling a cosmetic dentistry boom. It's already spawned a cottage industry of dental day spas—facilities that battle dental phobia with aromatherapy neck-wraps, foot massages, vibrating pillows and other amenities that add a queen-for-a-day flair. "The idea is to get away from the old drill-and-fill concept, and create a more pampering environment," says Palm Beach, Florida, dentist **Jay Lerner, D.D.S.**

The huge sums commanded by dental day spas (and the broad nature of the medical services offered by some—see "Do you need a second opinion?" page 115) and cosmetic dentists make it crucial to ensure that you're getting the best quality work for your money. Here's what to expect for four popular procedures that fix typical midlife tooth troubles.

(continued on page 112)

Porcelain VENEERS

GOAL Redesign your smile—cover worn, chipped, misshapen, stained or misaligned teeth.

PROS: Veneers are wafer-thin facings of natural-looking, translucent porcelain that are bonded on to the front of teeth. Since the early Eighties, the technique has advanced rapidly; stronger bonding materials will hold your new teeth for 10–12 years, says Lerner.

Veneering is a two-step process. First, teeth are filed down a bit to accommodate the porcelain facings. For crooked or protruding teeth, more aggressive drilling is required. A mold is cast, then temporaries are attached while the dental laboratory fashions your veneers. A week or two later, the finished veneers are placed on the teeth, filed for proper fit and bite, then



bonded for the duration. While veneering just the front teeth is most common, a growing trend is to veneer up to 20 teeth, a procedure that, Lerner says, "builds out the sides of the mouth and supports the muscles of the lower face, creating a more youthful appearance."

CONS: Expense, for sure. One big price factor is the dentist's reputation. Fabulous

veneers require artistry and perfectionism; a dentist known for great veneers commands equally fabulous prices. Lab work is also crucial, and a 2000 survey showed that nearly half of dentists said they had difficulty obtaining high-quality work; it sounds strange, but ask prospective dentists if they're pleased with the labs they hire.

REALITY CHECK: Some dentists offer slightly lower fees by suggesting you won't need temporaries while waiting for your veneers. Don't believe it—you'll want your teeth protected. I had to wear temporaries for nearly a month, because the lab didn't get the first set of veneers right. Also, expect some discomfort—most people require numbing.

COST: \$700–\$1,500 per veneer.

