

# It's never too late for a smile makeover

**A**t 88 years old, Eunice Carter decided she wanted a prettier smile. "I had crowns across my four upper front teeth," says Eunice, "but that is as far as they went. I just didn't like the looks of my teeth from the sides, so two years ago during a dental appointment I asked Dr. Blank what he recommended."

Stephen G. Blank, DDS, practices cosmetic and functional dentistry in Port St. Lucie. Mindful of each patient's expectations, Dr. Blank chooses his cosmetic dentistry procedures and methods carefully. He takes his time in evaluating both the patient's dental condition and how the new smile will fit with other facial features.

**Stephen G. Blank, DDS**

"Eunice wanted to improve the appearance of her smile, and she didn't allow herself to feel limited by her age," observes Dr. Blank, "so we created a smile design that took into account her concerns about her full smile. Her teeth were pretty much intact, but just like fine china they had developed surface cracks and had yellowed with wear. Additionally, the crowns on her front teeth had been produced with the old technology of ceramic over metal, which can darken at the gum lines and lacks the translucency of the newer all-porcelain restorations."

"Dr. Blank described what he could do for me to help me reach my goal, and I said, *Well let's do it,*" recounts Eunice.

## Ceramic restorations

Dr. Blank designed a plan for Eunice using 10 individual all-ceramic restorations.

"During the smile design visit, we speak with our patients about their desires and goals," notes Dr. Blank. "The design includes the length of the teeth, the proportions we are looking for, and the desired shape of the teeth. We then take study models and photographs of our patients that we send to the laboratory for the wax-up."

A *wax-up*, or a wax model of how the enhanced or repaired teeth will look, is completed by the laboratory. It is used to make any necessary changes before the lab proceeds to make the patient's new restorations, which in Eunice's case were all-porcelain veneers and crowns.



*Stephen G. Blank, DDS, is a graduate of Northwestern University Dental School in Chicago. He has since completed intensive continuing education studies, and he and his dental team have completed the Dental Organization for Conscious Sedation program. Dr. Blank has taught continuing education courses for dentists, dental assistants, and hygienists in conjunction with Indian River Community College's Dental Science department, and he is a facilitator/mentor with the Dental Boot Kamp program and a supporter of the Smiles for Life Foundation. Dr. Blank enjoys teaching dental teams around the country.*

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"When replacing crowns, such as the four Eunice was having done, we take into consideration any changes that have taken place in the patient's mouth," explains Dr. Blank. "For instance, if the gums have changed, we modify the preparations to the current gum level so the crown does not appear short."

On the second visit, the patients' teeth are prepared for the new restorations, and any old dentistry is removed. Impressions are made for the laboratory, and temporaries that match the wax-up are placed.

"The temporaries give our patients the opportunity to see how their new restorations will look," observes Dr. Blank. "At this stage changes can be made, such as adding a bit of length or a little curvature or a slight reduction. We give the laboratory instructions on coloring, translucency, and brightness."

"Following her second visit, Eunice left our office with resin temporaries that looked beautiful, just like her new teeth were going to look," says Dr. Blank.

"Three weeks later I had my new restorations," remembers Eunice, "and I'm extremely happy with the results. I'm 90 years old now, and people say I just don't look it."

"Dr. Blank and his staff are excellent, and my smile makeover gives me a nice feeling. I have a couple of wonderful kids, six grandkids, and five great grandkids, so I have a lot to smile about." **FHCN**—Kris Kline

## For that healthy smile ...

Dr. Blank and his staff look forward to meeting the readers of *Florida Health Care News*. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call **(772) 878-7348**. His office is located at **184 N.W. Central Park Plaza** in Port St. Lucie.



Photo courtesy of Eunice Carter

Dr. Blank invites you to visit his website at [www.PSLDENTIST.com](http://www.PSLDENTIST.com).