



Better choices

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Compared to twenty years ago one of the major changes in healthcare is the dramatic increase in choice. Choice can be good and it can also be bad, so how do we both as dentists and patients choose the best treatments. Here is a short list that may help.

- There is no perfect treatment; all have various pros and cons that need to be carefully considered. A treatment that most suits a person in their twenties may be totally unsuitable for a person in their eighties.
- The only way to know if a treatment is reliable or not is to see how it stands the test of time. Most anything can be deemed successful over 18 months but what is the success rate at 5 and 10 years later. We therefore need to be a little wary of 'the newest or latest' therapies if there is no medium to long term reliable research backing up the claims.
- When making a choice it is always best initially to look at all your options impartially as though time and money do not exist and then carefully strike out the unsuitable choices. You may be surprised once you know all your practical choices and how successful each of them is over time, then selecting the right treatment becomes very simple.

Our practice philosophy is to try and tailor the best treatment to each patient's personal needs both in the short, medium, long term and budget.

Using special equipment and techniques like digital imaging and surgical microscopy we have been able to dramatically improve long term success when it comes to saving teeth. The ability to prolong the health of your own teeth has many advantages over implants such as aesthetics, function and reducing the need for surgery. In many cases implants are the best treatment but I think all other practical solutions need to be carefully considered before making that choice. I have been placing and restoring on implants for the past 20 years and the key to success is careful planning and a conservative attitude.



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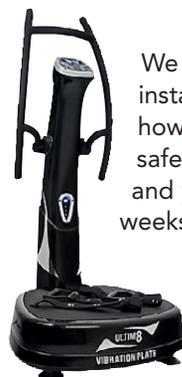
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