

New York Dentist - An Interview with Dr. Elisa Mello

Q. Tell us about yourself and your practice.

A. My name is Dr. Elisa Mello. I am a cosmetic dentist and practice in NYC with my husband Dr. Ramin Tabibzadeh. We have 2 sons Oliver 8 years old and Alex 3 ½ years old. I am definitely a busy busy mom juggling career and 2 active boys!

Q. What are the main services you provide?

A. Our practice is primarily focused on Cosmetic and Reconstructive Dentistry. This would include smile makeovers veneers crowns TMJ treatment Invisalign bleaching and changing out old silver fillings. We help patients who suffer from headaches that are a direct result of an unstable bite caused by grinding teeth bruxism incomplete orthodontic treatment and patchwork dentistry. Snoring and sleep apnea are also treated as they can be directly related to these problems as well. We treat many patients who have been grinding their teeth and worn them out. We are trained to not only make you look good but feel good focusing on creating a healthy stable bite that looks incredible.

Q. What is the minimum age you take patients?

A. We typically see adults but a large part of our practice is treating teenagers with the Invisalign Teen Orthodontic system-clear aligners made especially for teens. This treatment can be started as young as 11 yrs old.

Q. What should one do to take care of teeth?

A. The best way to treat your teeth is with a daily routine that you can stick to. A busy mom doesn't have a lot of time so using the right products and tools in the most efficient way is critical. We recommend that patients use an electric toothbrush because of its efficiency. Nightly flossing is recommended - it is most effective to have the cleanest mouth possible before we sleep. During sleep we have reduced salivary flow so there is reduced natural cleansing and breakdown of residual food and bacteria. In addition technology exists today that can test your personal risk to decay. With advanced technology we can quantitatively assess the level of risk a patient has for decay. Decay will only form in a mouth that is acidic in the presence of sugars and bacteria that produce toxins that decay the tooth. The technology we use measures each patients pH to determine what their level of risk is as well as the level of activity of bacteria. We can prescribe prescription toothpastes and rinses to stop further decay from occurring based on these tests and make modifications to their diet if necessary. These modifications would include reducing acid and carbohydrate (which breaks down in the mouth to sugar) drinks and food.

Q. What are the signs of oral cancer?

A. The problem with oral cancer is that there are no signs! As with most cancers it doesn't hurt until its too late. Oral cancer generally appears as an ulcer most commonly on the floor of the mouth or on the tongue. But it can occur anywhere in the mouth so it is important that a patient is checked routinely at their check-up appointments by their Dentist and /or hygienist- 5% of all cancers is Oral Cancer.

Q. How do dental implants work?

A. Dental implants are amazing! They replace a missing tooth in the position where your tooth used to be. After sufficient healing and a process called osseointegration where the implant becomes attached to the surrounding bone a crown can be placed on it. Implants allow the dentist to replace missing teeth without touching any other tooth.

Q. How often should one have dental exam and clean?

A. At a minimum a patient should have their teeth checked and cleaned yearly. That being said it really depends on the patient's mouth - the healthier the less frequent. Sometimes it is necessary for a patient to have cleanings every 3 months if they have periodontal/gum disease. During pregnancy we recommend a patient have their cleanings during their 2nd trimester.

Q. Which toothbrush is better regular or electric?

A. An electric toothbrush is the most efficient. Many have timers and speed and sensitivity adjustments. Busy moms never have any time for themselves so it is not uncommon for a busy mom to brush for only 30 seconds and not realize it! They think they have brushed longer so a timer is really a great tool. However with the right technique which a dentist or hygienist can show you a soft manual toothbrush can be just as good.

Q. How quickly will a person be able to complete cosmetic dentistry treatment?

A. The majority of cosmetic procedures in our practice can be completed in as little as 2-3 visits. This is over a span of about 2 weeks. For busy people-especially moms! - we schedule a longer appointment to be as efficient with our time as possible accomplishing more in less visits. For more complex cases it can take anywhere from 2 months to a year to complete.

For more information, please visit: www.nycsmiledesign.com