



# Embracing dental innovation to give you a Supreme smile

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Going to the dentist is one of those things that no one really likes to do. I remember when I was little and the other kids would make up these horrible stories about the dentist drill and, more than that, my own mother would tell me of the time she screamed so loud the entire school heard her! Really, these poor guys are set up to be disliked.

Recently however, I got to have a slightly different visit

to the dentist. One without fear of pain or discomfort, but quite an enjoyable visit where I was able to hear about a bunch of new technologies and ask some of those questions that I'd previously kept quiet about.

I mentioned to dentist Navin Vithal, as I walked into Tennyson Dental Surgery, that this was the most enthusiastic trip to the dentist I had had in many years. He just laughed and said he understood, but the more

I talked to him about Tennyson Dental and the new methods they had of dealing with teeth problems, the more I learned that there really isn't too much to be afraid of.

Navin never thought he would be a dentist, in fact he told his father it was a job he would never do, but during time spent completing an honours degree in bio chemistry, he took a year off and studied dentistry out of interest. ☺





Much to his surprise he really enjoyed it and came back to university to finish off his training in that field. "I sort of just fell into it," he says. "I used to always build models when I was younger so I guess it kind of fit."

Navin opened his first practice in 1991 in Lower Hutt. The business grew and eventually he opened another one on Lorne Street in Wellington Central. Three years ago he rebuilt the Lower Hutt surgery and moved it to its current location where it has nine rooms. Between the two practices, Supreme Dental Concepts has more than 25 staff and is one of the most technologically advanced practices in New Zealand.

As technology was one of the things that first attracted Navin to dentistry he is always interested to see what new advancements are coming out. He told me all about a new treatment to straighten teeth called Invisalign. As this product is a substitute for braces, I was particularly interested in learning how it worked. If after an initial consultation you learn that Invisalign is suitable for you, a mould is made to fit your teeth that looks like it is made from clear plastic. Each tooth mould is individual and applies just the right amount of pressure needed to move that tooth into its correct position.

If you imagine a type of mouth guard that is so much smaller it fits only around your teeth, but is as easy as that to put in and take out, that's what the Invisalign mouth piece looks like. You wear it for two weeks at a time, but unless someone looks closely, they can't see it in your mouth. They are like invisible braces that you can take out if you have a big party to go to or maybe a special photo. They are less painful and more socially acceptable than standard braces and make it possible for a wider range of patients to get them. Navin says they have people aged from 14, 15 years up to 50 and 60 years of age coming in to try out this new way of straightening teeth. Supreme Dental Concepts is at present the second largest Invisalign provider in New Zealand.

Dysport is another tool that Tennyson Dental uses to stop people from grinding down their teeth or to reduce a gummy smile. Dysport is used for wrinkle reduction by many people around the world to maintain youthful looks. Navin says that when he first heard about using



Invisalign teeth straightening

Dysport he thought it was just for getting eyebrow lifts and other such things, but now he sees it as a useful dentistry tool. Technology is always moving forward and dentistry is one area where there is plenty of room for improvement. Tennyson will soon be introducing laser scanners in the mouth that can be used to make caps for teeth, new anaesthetic that reverses the numbing affect and much more.

Navin says the most important thing about all of these new technologies and methods is that people who are interested in them come in and learn about them first. "We spend a lot of time making reports for people so they understand what they can do and it's important that they then go away and think about it." Supplying people with information is a big part of his job, says Navin. And because they have such a large team with different expertise who enjoy different areas of dentistry, they cater for a wide group of people and their needs.

The clinics themselves are quite a bit different to any I had ever been in. It is big and spacious and all of the clinical rooms have TVs hung above the chairs with DVDs playing on them explaining in simple terms about cavities and wisdom teeth and other problems people can encounter with their teeth.

Even after 26 years of working as a dentist, Navin still loves it, you can see it when you talk to him and watch as his whole face changes when he's talking about a particular patient or his newest technique. He will tell you his favourite things about it are that it's still challenging, there are always new methods to learn and new technologies to master and, most of all, it's always rewarding seeing someone leave with a new confidence.

If you are interested in learning more about any of these procedures or having your own consultation at Supreme Dental Concepts, check out the website at [www.supremedentalconcepts.co.nz](http://www.supremedentalconcepts.co.nz) or pop in and talk to one of their staff about what might be suitable for you.

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