



Dr Angelo Lazaris is a leading expert in general and cosmetic dentistry. Using the latest state-of-the art technology and techniques, clients are assured of the most advanced treatment available. A contributor to top fashion magazines, Dr Lazaris has performed procedures on Channel Nine's Body Work and Fox 8's Australia's Search for the Next Top Model.

Virgine's mouth makeover

Virgine was born in a small town in northern France called Lille. She grew up with the outlook of only going to the dentist when something was wrong with your teeth and therefore never had a clean or basic checkups.

Virgine has two kids, a five year old, Kenyon, born in New York, and a seven month old, Lili-Ella, born here in Sydney.

During her pregnancies, Virgine had big troubles with her teeth — root canal work and a tooth pulled out. She was in a lot of pain. She says her teeth have always given her trouble.

Crooked and misshapen front teeth, coupled with a large amount of visible gum, have made Virgine so self-conscious she is too embarrassed to show her teeth and although she says she is a happy person, she hardly ever smiles

Virgine finally sought help from cosmetic dentist Dr Angelo Lazaris, who prescribed a course of treatment involving a gum lift, tooth whitening and a series of crowns and veneers to cover Virgine's troublesome teeth.

Firstly, Virgine sees periodontist Dr Kevin Todes, who surgically raises the gum level, cutting away the excess gum to expose more tooth surface.

Two weeks later, Virgine is back at Dr Lazaris's surgery for the major part of her treatment. First, the teeth are whitened in a process that only takes an hour. The whitening is essential, even for teeth that will be covered by veneers, because the veneers are translucent and any stains will be visible through them.

Then Dr Lazaris grinds about a millimetre from each tooth that is to be crowned, creating a space for the new crowns and veneers.

Finally, he takes a mould of her mouth so the new teeth can be custom fitted to Virgine's mouth. Each crown and veneer is individually made by a dental technician, which will take around two weeks. In the meantime, Dr Lazaris fits a temporary set of crowns. This temporary set is such a vast improvement on Virgine's existing teeth that when she sees herself in the mirror, Virgine bursts into tears.

Two weeks later, the new crowns and veneers are in place and Virgine finally has something to smile about.

**Cost** - Virgine's treatment, involving gum lift, tooth whitening and a set of upper crowns and veneers, cost \$20,000.

**Recovery time** - although not technically recovery time, temporary crowns are fitted for two weeks until the permanent ones can be made and fitted.

Surgeon's notes

**Diagnosis:** Virgine presents with an aesthetic dental problem caused by a variety of factors.

Firstly, she has a maxillary excess. In this case the maxilla, or upper jaw, is slightly overgrown, thus bringing the teeth and the gums with it. When the patient smiles, she shows an excessive amount of gum tissue, which is usually hidden by the upper lips. She has a thin and very mobile upper lip. A number of Virgine's teeth are rotated out of position, or misshapen. In particular, the upper lateral incisor teeth are very small and peg-shaped.

This alone exposed more gum than usual when the patient smiled. She also has a condition called altered passive eruption. In normal tooth eruption, when the teeth first erupt in childhood, the gum tissue often persists around them



Virgine hates the way her teeth look



Now Virgine is happy to smile.



for some time. As the individual matures, the gum recedes to the cemento-enamel junction, where the enamel covered crown of the tooth meets the root. In altered passive eruption, the gum fails to recede completely, making the teeth appear short and consequently displaying excessive gum tissue.

As the adult teeth slowly erupt, they cause the overlying deciduous (baby) tooth to resorb away and eventually fall out. In Virgine's case, the upper right canine tooth has failed to resorb away and, rather than push it through, the adult teeth have erupted around it. Virgine has had one extra tooth on the right side, which has shifted all other teeth to the left. Therefore, Virgine's dental midline does not coincide with her facial midline or mid-sagittal plane.

Virgine originally presented for routine treatment, however I noticed that she had a guarded smile, in that she had trained herself (subconsciously) to mask the appearance of her teeth when laughing or talking. When questioned about the appearance of her teeth, Virgine admitted to being self-conscious about their appearance for a very long time. We were able to formulate a treatment plan that addressed all her concerns.

**Procedure:**

Ideally, Virgine should have been treated with a combination of orthodontics to re-align her teeth and orthognathic surgery to reposition her upper jaw. This would be followed by a crown-lengthening procedure and porcelain veneers.

Although the above treatment would have resulted in perfect functional and aesthetic result, it would take two to three years in total and Virgine considered this "overkill". As an alternative, we came up with a plan that would address her aesthetic concerns without prolonged treatment or elaborate dental procedures. We have effectively accepted minor flaws in the final outcome to achieve a near-perfect result with much less time, expense and difficulty in treatment.

**Treatment schedule:**

Records. A complete set of x-rays and pre-treatment photos were taken. We also took impressions for study models and case planning. These models were used, along with digital computer stimulation, to mock up Virgine's proposed treatment. From there, I also constructed a surgical guide, so that Dr Todes could lift Virgine's gums to my prescribed level prior to planning the veneers.

Periodontal crown-lengthening and extraction of deciduous tooth. The patient was referred to periodontist Dr Kevin Todes, who then performed the surgical crown-lengthening procedure by removing excessive gum tissue and alveolar bone to facilitate the repositioning of gumlines to my prescribed level, to allow for a better tooth proportionality in the final result. He also reshaped the gums slightly to help me re-align the front teeth closer to the facial midline.

Tooth whitening. Utilising the Britesmile system, we apply a concentrated peroxide gel to tooth surfaces and this penetrates into the tooth structure and oxidizes any pigments, making the teeth whiten permanently.

Preparation of porcelain veneers, crowns and bridges. The teeth are shaped to the desired dimensions to accommodate these restorations. Impressions are then taken and the temporary veneers are placed as an intermediary restoration, both protecting the underlying teeth and giving both patient and clinician a preview of the final result before completion.

Bonding or issuing of veneers, crowns. Utilising these hand-formed shells of porcelain bonded to the teeth, we are able to re-size, re-colour and re-align the teeth to ideal proportions. The restorations are placed and trialled for fit and aesthetics. If both patient and I are happy with the results, they are bonded permanently to the teeth.