

The Importance of Digital Dental Photography

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In this fast-progressing era of advanced technologies and gadgets, many trends have been changed in the field of dentistry as well. One of them is "Dental Photography". With the increased demand of world class documentation of cases, last one decade has seen such a histrionic change in the techniques and gears for dental photography.

The benefits of having a top-quality documentation of clinical cases in dentistry. The important ones are.

Diagnosis and treatment planning

A good quality high resolution picture can be an evaluative tool to assess the position of the teeth in relation to the natural planes and landmarks of the face and lips. A dental photograph allows the practitioner to:

- Critically analyze incisal edge position (in anterior teeth)
- Tooth's shape, size and proportions
- Intensities of characterizations and contours
- Translucencies within the incisal edge
- Gingival zenith.

Patient education and easy communication

Photo records of clinical cases kept by the clinician can be a precious collection of documents to educate the patients helping them to decide what is the best treatment modality for their condition.

Better lab communication

A high resolution photograph can provide much needed information to create a final restoration with more accurate hue, value, and chroma specially in cases of anterior esthetic restorations.

Promotion/marketing

Patient's 'Before/After' photos are authoritative Images that can encourage and enthuse patients to follow a treatment plan. They can also be put up on social media for marketing and advertising purposes.

Professional teaching

In health sciences, clinical procedures and/or instructions can't be explained without proper audio-visual aids, hence a high-quality documentation is a must as texts alone are inadequate in describing the concepts or specific procedures.

Self-improvement

Clinical photographic records help to get better at what we do by reminding us of the quality of work has been done in the past.

Legal documentation

Properly documented clinical cases can be great help for defense specially in medico-legal cases.

Essential instruments for dental photography

A DSLR, A 100 mm Focal length Macro Lens, A Ring/Twin Flash and accessories such as Retractors, Contrasters and Mirrors.

Conclusion

High-quality, precise clinical photographs can easily be obtained by appropriately trained staff using the proper equipment, settings and technique. Understanding the basics of dental photography — including equipment and technique — and properly applying these fundamentals will help dental teams document consistent, and clinically useful, dental photographic records.