

Dental photography for the everyday practitioner

CLINICAL
TIPS

Nishan Dixit highlights the practical uses of dental photography and provides some top tips for those wishing to start out

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If a picture is worth a thousand words, then dental photographs can be invaluable. Dental photography itself has become integral to modern practice and is used for various reasons.

For instance, it is essential to the record-keeping process, and also vital in facilitating effective treatment by aiding communication between the dentist and the dental technician. In addition, dental photography enables you to critically appraise and showcase the amazing dentistry you provide.

Getting started

With techniques and digital imaging technology ever advancing, there's no reason why the everyday practitioner cannot take great dental photographs quickly and easily.

The views that clinicians should consider taking photographs of include:

- Full face
- Anterior, right and left smile
- Anterior, right and left retracted, teeth parted
- Upper occlusal
- Anterior, right and left close-up
- Lower occlusal.

Having the right camera settings can make or break dental photographs. Therefore, it is vital for dentists to explore these features to find what they are most comfortable using and what enables them to capture the highest quality images.

Top tips

Every dentist will develop their own methodology for taking dental photographs, but there are some key considerations to make. For instance, I always heat the camera mirror to prevent condensation and fogging. I also ensure the patient's lips are well retracted so I have the best possible view when shooting.

With regard to equipment, I use a Canon camera body with a Sigma macro lens and twin Canon flashes on an Owl bracket. Moreover, I will shoot in both JPEG and RAW formats, and consider the background of each shot to maximise results.

Training

For those just getting started in dental photography, there are plenty of hands-on courses available. These training programmes can provide the perfect platform for you to experience the latest imaging technology, while exploring the techniques and processes involved with taking top-quality photographs.

Beyond these courses, however, it is important for dentists to exercise their artistic flair in dental photography day-to-day. After all, practice makes perfect. **D**



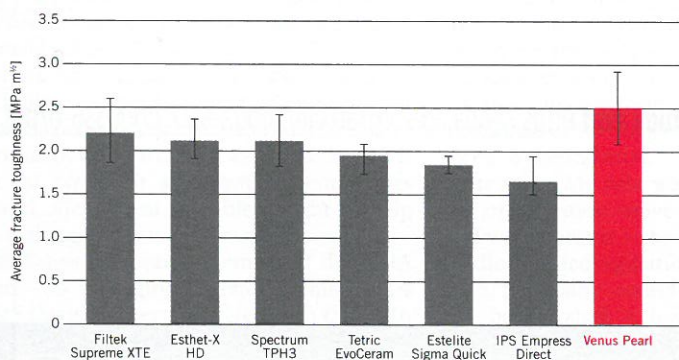
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