

Times & Transcript (Moncton)

Orthodontist embraces technology; Dr. John McManaman uses new technology to make trips to the orthodontist a little easier

Thursday, November 13, 2008

Page: A9

Section: News;News

Byline: Eric Lewis Times & Transcript Staff

A Moncton orthodontist is using new technology and progressive measures in his practice to change the way patients think of braces and how they look at a trip to the sometimes dreaded orthodontist.

Dr. John McManaman, whose practice is on the corner of Mountain Road and Trinity Drive, uses relatively new computer technology that assists orthodontists in determining where a patient's braces need to be placed.

It cuts down on time for the patient and doctor, and allows for faster, more precise treatment says the orthodontist, who was recently awarded the Excellence in Service award at the Greater Moncton Chamber of Commerce's annual Excellence Awards.

McManaman knows of only one other orthodontist in Atlantic Canada -- a Fredericton doctor -- who uses the same technology, called OrthoCAD IQ, made by Cadent.

"I don't know why more people aren't using it," he said in an interview.

According to McManaman, the computer software allows for more accurate placement of braces, fewer visits to orthodontists for adjustments and a shorter period of time in which the braces need to be worn.

While the initial cost of the technology means braces are more expensive at the outset, patients save money over the long term by having only 12-15 appointments for adjustments instead of 30 or more.

Also, instead of needing braces for three or four years, the time is usually cut down to two or three years.

As for that painful few hours spent in the orthodontist's chair while the braces are installed? Gone.

"We usually have all the braces and wires in place, and an explanation of how to clean them and how to treat them, all in half an hour," McManaman explains.

When a patient seeks out McManaman for braces, he makes an impression of their teeth and gums. That impression is then scanned into a computer, which creates a three-dimensional representation of one's teeth.

McManaman, using the computer software, can then examine the teeth from every angle and even place braces on the virtual teeth.

The software shows both the orthodontist and the patient how the braces should fit and what the end result should be once treatment is complete several months down the road.

The virtual braces can even be manipulated on the computer to provide different options for McManaman and his patient.

It's an interesting sight to watch crooked, jumbled teeth on a giant screen turned into a shining example of a perfect set of teeth in mere seconds.

Once doctor and patient are happy with the simulated results of treatment, the information is sent to Cadent's OrthoCAD Center where customized bracket trays are made to fit the patient's mouth.

The braces are fitted into the trays, and with a little adhesive, the trays can be placed onto a patient's teeth.

An LED (light-emitting diode) is then flashed over the trays, and a few moments later, the trays can be removed. The braces will remain on the patient's teeth for elastics to be installed.

McManaman says the process is more comfortable for patients and easier for orthodontists.

"It used to be, we'd have to place each brace manually on each tooth," he says. "But it was a dark environment to work in, and you'd have cheeks moving, patients moving a bit, which made it difficult."

The computer-aided brace technology allows the doctor to spend less time moving braces around and more time educating his patients on how to clean and maintain their braces. McManaman has a progressive approach to orthodontics work.

In addition to new technology for teeth, there are televisions throughout the clinic, Xbox 360 game consoles for patients to use while waiting, and the clinic has a wifi connection for those who would like to work or surf the Internet while in the waiting room.

Patients of the good doctor can even track their progress via his website --- www.docbraces.com.

Also, McManaman and his staff of 17 work long hours to ensure they can meet all patients' needs. The clinic opens Monday to Friday at 7:30 a.m. and

closes as late as 7 p.m. on some days.

He provides free consultations to those looking for some dental work, and referrals aren't necessary.

McManaman also has a staff of five that works out of his satellite office in Charlottetown, P.E.I. He also does work in Summerside, P.E.I. and consultation work in Amherst, N.S.

"I've always been a workaholic," he says. "Just to become an orthodontist, it takes 11 years of school, so maybe it's in the job."

McManaman, a graduate of Dalhousie Dental School's Doctorate of Dental Surgery program and the University of Manitoba's three-year Masters Orthodontic program among other programs, set up shop with Dr. Johnson's orthodontic practice in Moncton a few years ago.

When Johnson retired, McManaman took over the practice.

"I strive to use nothing but the newest technology," he says of his practice. "It's more comfortable for the patients and it encourages more of them to come in."

McManaman says technology is changing the way people look at braces.

"Adults always equated orthodontic treatment with how it was done 15 years ago," he says.

He says orthodontics has come a long way since those few short years ago.

McManaman and his staff will soon be moving to a new, 6,500-square foot clinic on the corner of Frampton Lane and Mapleton Road. Currently under construction, the facility is expected to open early next year.

© 2008 Times & Transcript (Moncton)



DR  **McManaman**
ORTHODONTIST • E