

Editorial**Bothered by a ‘Gummy Smile’- Fix it with Botox**

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Botox is now widely accepted by the doctors and the patients to achieve facial esthetics. But does the face look complete without a perfect smile? Dentistry has evolved beyond just fillings and extractions. However we, as dentists, have become so tooth-centric that we forget that it is very important for the peri-oral areas to look as good as the teeth.

How many times have you seen an aesthetic dental case involving beautifully restored teeth that are left surrounded by wrinkled and thin lips, and deep nasolabial folds? Perhaps the patient has been given beautiful teeth but not a complete and beautiful smile.¹

Relationships between three components of teeth, lip framework, and the gingival scaffold determine the esthetic appearance of smile.¹

One of the most common reasons for seeking orthodontic treatment is excessive display of gingival tissue on smiling, usually referred to as a “gummy smile”, which is often esthetically displeasing. The muscular capacity to raise upper lip higher than average (hyper functional muscles) leads to excessive gingival display. The goal is to treat the condition with minimally alternative methods and one of such treatment modality is Botulinum toxin, commonly known as BOTOX. It works by selective denervation i.e. works by blocking the acetylcholine receptors on the muscle side of the junction.²

The clinical effects of a Botox injection become noticeable between 5-10 days.



Gummy smile before Botox therapy



Gummy smile covered after Botox therapy

It is an effective adjunctive procedure in restoring facial esthetics along with orthodontic treatment. It is one of the best available options to control activity of hyper functional muscles. It is time to broaden our horizons as a profession and use all of the tools available to us. BOTOX therapy is a conservative, minimally invasive treatment that can expand our therapeutic options for the benefit of our patients and is a natural progression of where we are going in the dental industry.³

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