

Snap-On Smile and my father

For more on this topic, go to www.dentaleconomics.com and search using the following key words: *fixed prosthesis, periodontist, Snap-On Smile, bone grafts, Dr. Peter Harnois.*

This is a short, yet heartwarming story of a son living up to his father's expectations and getting immense satisfaction in the process.

My 83-year-old father had a seven-tooth bridge that I placed more than 25 years ago. Ten months ago, it finally broke and he had to have the entire bridge removed. So, we consulted with my periodontist to place seven implant fixtures.

That was the simple part. He had nursed along this slowly failing fixed prosthesis. But he was not only concerned about having a removable prosthesis that covered his palate and triggered his claustrophobia, he was worried he would find difficulty in functioning with it for an entire year while his staged surgeries unfolded.

Extractions, bone grafts, and fixture placement led him to be concerned about whether he could function properly on a daily basis — chewing, speaking, and going out in public.

This concern grew even stronger as I showed him the standard possibilities of the current landscape of interim treatment partials and flippers. So he told me, with a half-smile on his face, that if I could not come up with a solution that would work for him, he would go “toothless” and tell the world that this was the best his son (“the dentist”) could do for his father!



Then I remembered listening to Dr. Marc Liechtung's lecture on Snap-On Smile. I realized this could be the answer my father and I were looking for — a comfortable, clasp-free, palate-free removable prosthesis that he could function with and look good in for almost a year of treatment time.

Two full PVS impressions, a full occlusal bite, and several photos later, my case was on its way to DenMat's lab in Santa Maria, Calif. Three weeks later, I was placing one of the easiest full arch removable restorations I have ever had the pleasure of delivering. This came right after my father's three-hour surgery at the periodontist's office.

My dad not only accepted this easily, he looked great, spoke almost immediately with no difficulty, could eat and drink, and he was able to move on with his life.

A simple daily regimen of antibacterial drops and night-time cleansing powder in water made my normally noncompliant patient look like a rock star.

Now 10 months later, we are just seven days away from placing seven abutment fixtures and seven fixed, single crowns. His S.O.S. will be a memory, but a great memory. He loves his Snap-On Smile!



To be able to treat my father — the man who raised me, put me through dental school, and was always there for me — made me feel so good about my abilities as a general dentist.

Treating so many of my patients with Snap-On Smile now makes dentistry easy and fun again. It is the only removable prosthesis I use to treat my implant patients, and it has made me a real hero with them (and, best of all, with my dad). **DE**

Dr. Peter Harnois graduated with honors from the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Dentistry in 1982 (thanks to his father!). He has been practicing general and cosmetic dentistry in Hinsdale, Ill., since 1983. Visit Dr. Harnois' website at www.yourlifesmiles.com.

