

Case Report: Zoom Bleaching for Aesthetic Enhancement and Mental Well-Being in a 37-Year-Old Female with Body Dysmorphic Disorder

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ABSTRACT

Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD) is a mental health condition where individuals develop an overwhelming preoccupation with perceived flaws in their appearance. often leading to emotional distress and a diminished quality of life. Dental aesthetics, particularly concerns about tooth color, can be a significant trigger for individuals with BDD. This case report focuses on a 37-year-old female patient diagnosed with BDD, who was undergoing psychiatric therapy while expressing dissatisfaction with the discoloration of her teeth. Her belief that a brighter smile would improve her confidence and mental well-being led her to seek professional whitening treatment. Following a thorough clinical assessment, the patient underwent three cycles of Zoom bleaching, a widely recognized and effective tooth-whitening procedure. The treatment achieved a noticeable improvement in tooth shade, which aligned with the patient's expectations. Beyond the aesthetic outcome, the patient reported a significant boost in her self-esteem and emotional outlook. Her psychiatrist also observed an improvement in her overall mental state, highlighting the positive psychological impact of the treatment. This case underscores the potential for cosmetic dental procedures to complement mental health interventions in individuals with BDD. It emphasizes the importance of a multidisciplinary approach that addresses both the aesthetic and emotional needs of the patient, ultimately improving their quality of life.

Introduction

Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD) is a complex mental health condition where individuals experience an intense preoccupation with perceived flaws in their appearance.¹ These flaws are often minor or even invisible to others, yet they can feel overwhelmingly significant to the person affected.^{2,1} For those living with BDD, this persistent dissatisfaction can deeply impact their emotional well-being, relationships, and daily life.^{3,1} Many patients struggle with self-esteem and confidence, and their concerns often become a central focus of their thoughts, leading to isolation and emotional distress.^{4,2}

In dentistry, we frequently encounter patients whose concerns about their smile or teeth go beyond simple aesthetic preferences.^{5,6} A person's smile plays a significant role in how they perceive themselves and how they believe others perceive them.⁷ For individuals with BDD, the appearance of their teeth can become a source of heightened anxiety, sometimes overshadowing other aspects of their life.⁸ While traditional treatment for BDD focuses on psychotherapy and, in some cases, medication, addressing specific aesthetic concerns can also play a meaningful role in their journey toward improved mental health.⁹

This case report presents the story of a 37-year-old female patient who struggled with BDD and sought treatment to enhance the brightness of her teeth. Already undergoing psychiatric counselling, she expressed that her discoloured teeth had been a long-standing source of distress. She believed that achieving a brighter smile would not only improve her appearance but also contribute to her overall sense of self-worth and confidence. After careful evaluation, the patient underwent three cycles of Zoom bleaching, a professional tooth whitening procedure known for its effectiveness and safety.

What makes this case particularly significant is the patient's positive response to the treatment—not just in terms of her dental aesthetics but also in her mental state. Following the procedure, she reported feeling a renewed sense of confidence and a noticeable improvement in her mood and outlook on life. Her psychiatrist also observed an encouraging shift in her

mental health, further validating the role of dental interventions as part of a holistic treatment approach.

This report highlights how dentistry can intersect with mental health, demonstrating that even seemingly small aesthetic changes can make a meaningful difference in a patient's life. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the emotional context of a patient's concerns and collaborating across disciplines to provide comprehensive care that addresses both physical and psychological well-being.



Case Presentation

A 37-year-old female patient presented to our clinic with concerns about the discoloration of her teeth. She expressed significant dissatisfaction with the shade of her teeth, describing them as "lifeless" and "dull." Figure-1 Her primary motivation for seeking treatment was to improve her smile, which she believed would enhance her confidence and overall appearance. However, upon further discussion, it became evident that her concerns extended beyond cosmetic dissatisfaction.

The patient revealed a history of Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD), a psychological condition characterized by an obsessive focus on perceived physical flaws. Her psychiatrist had referred her for dental treatment, noting that her fixation on her teeth was contributing to her emotional distress and impeding progress in therapy. She shared that she avoided smiling in social settings, often covering her mouth with her hand, and felt that her discolored teeth were a barrier to her personal and professional life.

The patient was undergoing regular psychiatric counseling sessions and was on a stable treatment regimen for her BDD. She expressed hope that improving her smile would positively impact her

mental health and help her regain a sense of normalcy in her daily interactions.



Figure 1



Figure 2

Pre-Treatment Assessment

A comprehensive pre-treatment assessment was conducted to evaluate the patient's oral health and suitability for cosmetic whitening. The clinical examination revealed extrinsic stains on the enamel surface, likely attributed to dietary habits and coffee consumption, along with mild intrinsic discoloration. Figure-1

The patient's oral hygiene was satisfactory, with no signs of active decay or periodontal disease, making her a suitable candidate for whitening treatment.

To establish a baseline, the initial shade of her teeth was recorded using the Vita Shade Guide, which indicated a shade of **A3.5**, a moderately darker shade on the scale. The patient expressed her desire to achieve a brighter, more natural shade that would harmonize with her complexion and overall appearance. Figure-1

The patient's medical and psychological history was carefully reviewed, with input from her psychiatrist. It was emphasized that the whitening procedure should be approached with caution, ensuring realistic expectations were set. The multidisciplinary approach between dental and mental health professionals was

key to ensuring the patient's psychological well-being throughout the treatment process.

After discussing the treatment options, risks, and expected outcomes, the patient opted for **Zoom whitening**, a professional bleaching system known for its effectiveness and safety. The procedure would involve three cycles, with close monitoring to ensure patient comfort and optimal results.

Treatment Plan

Zoom bleaching was chosen as the treatment approach, involving three in-office sessions of bleaching to achieve the desired shade improvement. The treatment plan was coordinated with the patient's psychiatrist to ensure that her mental health needs were properly addressed. Figure-2

Procedure

1. Preparation:

- Informed consent was obtained, outlining realistic expectations for the treatment outcome.
- A thorough prophylaxis was performed to remove surface debris and plaque.
- Soft tissues were isolated using a gingival barrier to prevent irritation during the procedure. Figure-3

2. Bleaching Protocol:

- A hydrogen peroxide-based Zoom bleaching gel was applied to the labial surfaces of the teeth.
- The Zoom light was activated for 15 minutes per cycle.
- The procedure was repeated for three cycles, with a total exposure time of 45 minutes. Figure-4

3. Post-Treatment Care:

- After the bleaching, the teeth were rinsed, and the gingival barrier was removed.
- Any post-treatment sensitivity was minimal and managed with a desensitizing gel.



Figure 3



Figure 4

Results

- **Shade Improvement:** Post-treatment, the recorded shade was A1, a significant improvement from the initial shade of A3.5. Figure-4
- **Psychological Impact:** The patient reported an immediate boost in self-esteem and confidence. Her psychiatrist observed a positive shift in her mental state during follow-up sessions, noting a reduction in her focus on perceived flaws.
- **Patient Satisfaction:** The patient expressed high satisfaction with the outcome, noting a marked improvement in the brightness and uniformity of her teeth, which aligned with her aesthetic goals.

Discussion

Zoom bleaching is an effective method for addressing extrinsic tooth discoloration and achieving aesthetic goals.¹⁰ In this case, the psychological benefits were just as significant. The patient's improved mental state illustrates the connection between aesthetic dental treatments and mental health, particularly for those dealing with Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD).¹¹ The collaboration between dental professionals and mental health specialists was integral to the success of this case.

Conclusion

This case highlights the dual benefits of Zoom

bleaching: significant aesthetic improvement and a positive impact on mental health. The patient's satisfaction and improved mental state emphasize the importance of considering both aesthetic and psychological needs when planning dental treatments.

Recommendations

- Regular follow-ups to monitor the stability of the shade, oral health, and psychological well-being.
- Ongoing coordination with the patient's psychiatrist to maintain mental health improvements.
- The use of at-home maintenance products, such as whitening toothpaste, to help preserve the results.

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