

*"It's nice to do work for hard-working people."
—Dr. Wade Pilling,
cosmetic dentist*



Dr. Wade Pilling and his staff

Smile Spa

Local cosmetic dentist's national recognition puts his contribution to the smile in the spotlight.

by Bethany Rhiel

The spicy-sweet fragrance of luxury. Massage chairs. Paraffin wax treatment. Warm, scented towels. Flat screen TVs. I felt as if I had entered a spa instead of Aesthetic Smiles, a cosmetic dental office in Meridian. Brochures placed here and there; as well as advertisements for mouthwash brought me back to reality, along with a new wave of nerves. I avoid dentists at all costs, but as a pregnant woman, I know how important dental care is for me and this new baby. Gum disease has been linked with low birth weight and premature babies. It has also been linked to heart disease, diabetes, high cholesterol and even cancer in a high percentage of adults. These things in mind, I took a deep breath and approached the front desk.

Dawn, the warm, friendly office manager checked me in and smiled as I sheepishly explained that I ate my breakfast in the car and asked for a little cup of mouthwash. She had an even better offer: a disposable toothbrush with water activated toothpaste. After a thorough brushing, I swished and gargled the provided mouthwash and headed back to the comfortable waiting room feeling refreshed and little more confident.

Soon, Megan, a dental assistant appeared in the doorway, called my name and led me to a machine that looked like something out of a sci-fi

film. Megan explained that this digital x-ray machine had less radioactivity than a microwave, making it very safe for baby, and a much more efficient method for x-raying teeth. After a few twirls of the machine around my head, I forgot about the luxurious settings around me and felt anxiety creeping back in. Megan seemed to sense my rattled nerves and offered the hand wax treatment before we continued the exam.

Settled in a chair with my hands comfortably softening away in the warm, squishy wax and the gloves, we continued to take x-rays. Megan was very patient and understanding about my queasy pregnancy and anti-dentist feelings. Soon the dentist arrived, and before I had a chance to become completely unraveled, the dual dentist/massage chair began to knead my lower back in slow, methodical circles and I was able to relax during the patient/doctor interview. He pleasantly engaged me in conversation about family and subtly shifted to my dental history. As the exam became more in-depth, I focused on all I knew of the doctor and felt confident that I was in good hands.

Dr. Wade Pilling does everything with his patients in mind. "I tell my staff, 'Treat patients like you would your mother, not your mother-in-law,'" he told me with a chuckle. From the design and set up of his office, to the type of equipment he uses, he is passionate about what he does, equipped to do things right the first time, and determined to place every patient at ease.

Originally from Canada, Dr. Pilling received his degree in neurology and went on to graduate from the University of the Louisville School of Dental Medicine. After working with a cosmetic dentist, he knew this was the direction he wanted to go. "I love smiles," he said with an assuring one of his own, "it's fun, what we do. Here we see results immediately; there is an instant difference."


Dr. Pilling and his wife, along with their four children, knew they wanted to settle in the Western United States. The Pilling family loves boating, camping and many other outdoor activities. They found Meridian to fit their needs like a glove. After running his own practice here for four years, he has found his patients to be a good fit as well. "It's nice to do work for hard-working people."

While cosmetic dentistry is his specialty, Dr. Pilling is very involved in the general care of his patients as well. He likes to think of himself as a "one-stop shop" and avoids referring patients out. His practice provides everything from teeth cleaning to whitening, tooth repair to full mouth reconstruction. As he did during my visit, Dr. Pilling discusses dental care needs and cosmetic options with his patients, then together an action plan is put into place. Once sure I would never step foot in the office of a cosmetic dentist, I found self-consciousness about my smile fading under Dr. Pilling's encouraging action plan for my smile.

One of only two participating members of the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (AACD) in the Treasure Valley, Dr. Pilling's work has been featured in numerous magazines such as Shape, Oprah, Vogue and New Beauty. The AACD is so impressed with the outcome of his work, that his cases are often used in cosmetic dentistry advertisement brochures. Whether they have read about him, or been referred by friends and family, patients come to him from all over the country, even as far as New York, North Carolina and California.

A great portion of his success and popularity among his peers can be attributed to his commitment to advance his education and incorporate the newest technology in his work. "That's one of the things I love about working for Dr. Pilling," Megan told me, "he's constantly learning. Like a little kid with all of his gadgets and new technology."

New technology, the doctor explained to me, makes his work more accurate, which in the long term makes a big difference. He also makes an impact in our community by working with organizations such as, "Give Back A Smile" which helps transform the broken smiles of domestic abuse victims.

As my exam wrapped up and I discussed insurance and scheduling with Dawn, I left Aesthetic Smiles feeling energized for my planned treatment and relieved to finally find a dentist I trust. 

Aesthetic Smiles is located at 4795 N. Summit Way (off of McMillan Rd, between Meridian Rd. and Linder Rd.). To make an appointment call 208.888.0662.



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