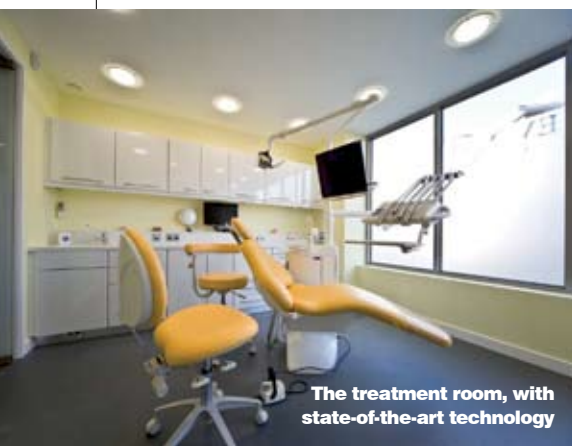
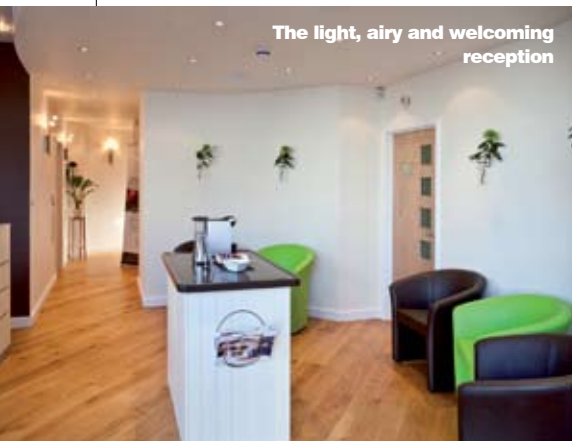




Carol injects a tiny needle of Juvéderm into Debbie's lip



The treatment room, with state-of-the-art technology



The light, airy and welcoming reception

Filled. with joy

Debbie Blackman becomes a convert to facial aesthetics, thanks to dental practice Evolve. **Vicky Green** takes a ringside seat. . .

Dentists might not immediately spring to mind if you were considering facial aesthetics, but in fact they're supremely qualified for the job, as Dr Carol Somerville Roberts BDS MFDS explains. "We

have an intimate knowledge of the anatomy of the face and we inject all the time," she says, which is why dermal fillers and Botox injections are among the treatments offered at her new, state-of-the-art practice in Portishead, alongside "all kinds of dentistry" from cosmetic

"Dentists have an intimate knowledge of the face"

“I haven’t looked like this for about 10 years!”

treatments such as teeth whitening and veneers to adult orthodontics and everyday check-ups. Carol opened the practice in January having graduated from Bristol University in 1996 and practised in Somerset for many years since; she’s clearly passionate about her work, saying Evolve has already been “busy – and great fun”.

She could hardly have found a better spot, in a new development between Waitrose and the High Street; everything about the gleaming white and airy practice (it was designed by an architect specialising in dental surgeries) spells reassurance for customers, from the welcoming reception, where you’re offered complimentary drinks from herbal teas to champagne, to the visible investment in the latest technology – a digital X-ray machine, DVD screen attached to the dentist’s chair for those undergoing longer treatments, air conditioning and a clinical camera for before-and-after pictures.

A first foray

I visit with Debbie, who is a little nervous before her first foray into the world of cosmetic treatments. She is hoping to get rid of the lines around her mouth and perhaps emerge with plumper lips to boot, and disappears with Marianne, the senior dental nurse, to run through her medical history, before I’m invited into the treatment room. Carol explains eloquently and in detail what the treatment entails and its benefits; as soon as Debbie hears it only takes around 10 minutes she visibly relaxes. Unlike Botox – botulinum toxin; more specifically, Carol normally uses a brand called Xeomin – which relaxes the muscles to prevent them forming wrinkles, dermal fillers are substances that are injected into skin to fill out the lines. Carol uses Juvéderm Ultra, a form of



The practice could hardly enjoy a better spot than this one between Waitrose and the High Street

“Everything about the new practice spells reassurance”

hyaluronic acid, which is naturally produced by the body in infancy, thus negating the need for patch testing. She’s never known anyone to experience infection or more than a little pain, she says, as Debbie signs the consent form, and such is Carol’s easy and open manner you believe her without question.

A younger, fresher you

We’ve all heard about – and seen – actresses who can no longer emote, their faces paralysed by Botox, lips plumped up out of human proportion to something resembling a fish. But most people, as Carol puts it, don’t want to look as though they’ve had any treatment; they just want to look like themselves, but fresher, maybe a few years younger. It’s comforting to hear Carol advising against “getting carried away” – not that Debbie had any intention of doing so.

She starts by inserting orange beads of bubblegum-flavoured gel into Debbie’s mouth and injecting the anaesthetic into her gums – whereas Botox is just like “having your eyebrows waxed,” according to Carol, dermal fillers are “more comfortable when you’re numb”. (As well as standard anaesthetics, Evolve offer sedation

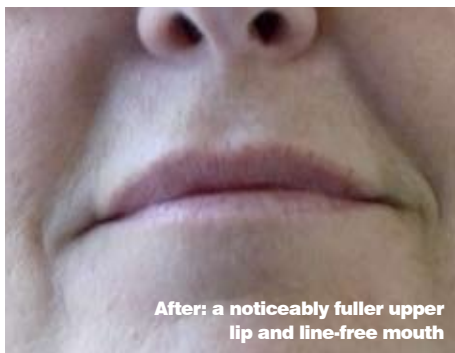
techniques which claim, intriguingly, to “make you feel asleep, while remaining in control”, leaving you with no memory of the treatment, or induce a “relaxed euphoria”. Great, says Carol, given that 60% of people admit to a fear of ordinary dental treatment, with 10% of us being positively phobic.)

Carol then takes the tiniest needle of Juvéderm (it’s measured in syringes), and starts injecting around Debbie’s mouth, before massaging the area to spread the substance around evenly. “Any discomfort?” she asks.

“No. It’s completely painless but such a weird sensation!” replies Debbie, who manages to laugh and chat along with Carol between injections, apparently unrestricted. It’s all over in a matter of minutes and the mirror is handed to Debbie.

“Oh my goodness! I haven’t looked like this for 10 years!” She says. It’s true: her upper lip is visibly plumper than before, and the lines have all but disappeared. We are both impressed. While some of the swelling is a reaction to the treatment, she should get her “complete result” in around two days, says Carol, before advising Debbie to avoid, over the next 24 hours, excessive alcohol or make-up, saunas and sunbeds, and extreme facial expressions. Massage and E45 cream can help with any discomfort.

Two days later and Debbie has experienced a little bruising, but very little pain; a week later and she feels back to normal, only with an upper lip she thought she said goodbye to long ago. What’s more, this 10-minute treatment should now last up to 12 months. And while she’s in no danger of “getting carried away”, she admits she’s already psyching herself up for the next time. 🐾



After: a noticeably fuller upper lip and line-free mouth

In detail

The treatment: Juvéderm Ultra derma filler
Price: £337 for two syringes (one syringe costs £237)

Time: Treatment only takes around 10 minutes but allow an hour for consultation and preparation time

Lasts: Up to 12 months

Evolve Dentistry

24 Harbour Road, Portishead

tel: 01275 842550; www.evolve-dentistry.co.uk