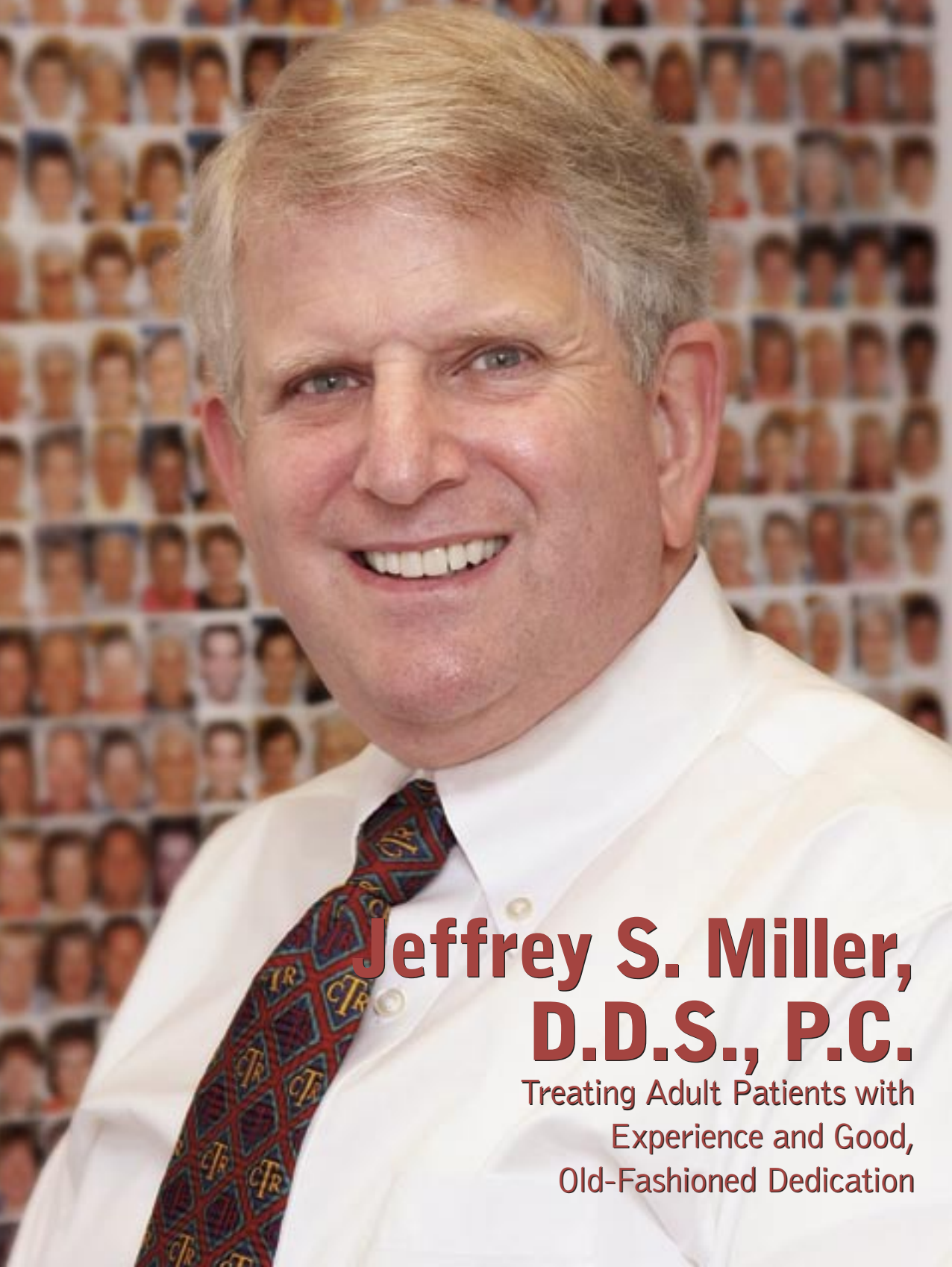


# DOCTOR *of* DENTISTRY

A BUSINESS AND LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE FOR DENTISTS



**Jeffrey S. Miller,  
D.D.S., P.C.**

Treating Adult Patients with  
Experience and Good,  
Old-Fashioned Dedication

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## Treating Adult Patients with Experience and Good, Old-Fashioned Dedication

By Cathy Marley

When Dr. Jeffrey Miller started his Mesa dental practice in 1977, television had just stopped airing *Marcus Welby, M.D.*, one of the most popular doctor shows in U.S. television history. Americans had lost their favorite doctor, a man known for his kindness and gentle bedside manner, but Arizona's dental patients had gained a worthy equivalent in Dr. Miller.

Years later, he is still in the same office and widely respected for the depth of his experience, his resourcefulness and, most importantly, his kindness. His patients, most of whom are seniors age 55 and up, are the very people who watched *Marcus Welby*. They are a generation that expects medical professionals to be wise, gentle and able to solve almost any problem. Dr. Miller fits their expectations. "My office isn't glamorous, but it's welcoming," he says. "My patients feel comfortable there and that is important. When they are comfortable, I am able to serve their needs."

### SENIORS' UNIQUE PROBLEMS BENEFIT FROM 30 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

Many older patients face problems unique to their age group: dry mouth from prescription medications and decay caused by extended use of cough drops, tooth loss, bite collapse, etc. Health issues such as heart problems can also affect their dental treatment. They often have a difficult time finding a dentist who understands their complex dental and health issues, and

**Dr. Miller discussing a case with lab tech Kelly.**



PHOTO BY MARK SQUIRE

most have visited a number of other dentists before coming to his East Mesa practice.

Dr. Miller practices adult dentistry with an emphasis on fixed and removable prosthodontics, including placing and restoring dental implants, as well as cosmetic and preventive dentistry. He regularly encounters patients whose aging dental work is deteriorating. Older dentures may be damaged or may no longer fit properly. Dental implants placed years ago may need to be repaired or modified even though they are no longer in production. This is where Dr. Miller's three decades of experience is invaluable. He knows the questions to ask and people to talk to in order to successfully treat these cases.

"Experience cannot be taught," Dr. Miller says. "It's what you learn over the years." His 30 years of hands-on practice is supplemented with over 2,500 hours of continuing dental education in 20 states; he brings this wealth of knowledge to his practice. He has also lectured, written articles, consulted and mentored other dentists.

His patients benefit from his experience in a comfortable setting with a well-trained staff that genuinely cares about them. The office is relaxed, and Dr. Miller is committed to giving individual attention without excessive fees. He offers free denture and implant consultations, and his treatment plans usually offer several options with varying costs. "We look for a variety of ways to solve their problem and our goal is for them to function and look better than they have in years. That's how we provide value."

Dr. Miller believes communication is vital, especially for mature patients who don't always know how to explain their problems. He listens to the patients instead of telling them what to do. Listening and explaining treatments are keys to his excellent relationship with his patients. In new patient consults, he spends extra one-on-one time explaining things in an understandable way and frequently uses demo models of the various types of treatments along with an extensive library of before-and-after photos that show the treatment results.



Staff in front of the office building

## DENTIST AND PATIENT — PARTNERS IN TREATMENT

Dr. Miller is a problem solver with years of experience and successful results. He has learned that there are usually multiple ways to treat a case. He offers multiple treatment options whenever possible, and he tailors the treatment to his patient's dental needs and financial resources. In developing the treatment plan, he evaluates each individual situation and assesses which teeth he can save, which are marginal and which are hopeless. He then recommends an appropriate combination of extractions, removable appliances, crowns, implants, etc.

Clearly explaining each option, he involves the patient in the decision-making process. Together, they come to the decision that works best for the patient's circumstances and needs. In essence, Dr. Miller and his patient become partners in the treatment. He says, "When we are finished they are happier, and we both feel good about the choice they make."

## HELPING HARD-TO-FIT DENTURE PATIENTS

Dr. Miller's accomplishments and skills in the areas of complete, partial and implant dentures are well known through the articles he's written and the thousands of cases he's treated. He has developed several innovative techniques with removable prosthetics to help hard-to-fit denture patients. Notably, he pioneered the use of bladed back teeth for increased chewing efficiency. For many years, he has used imported denture teeth for enhanced appearance and cushion liners in the lower denture for greater comfort. Additionally, he has placed hundreds of small-diameter dental implants, which are simple and cost effective, to anchor lower dentures and to eliminate the palate in uppers.

Because he is aware of the available options, he is comfortable recommending partial dentures and recommending which teeth to save and which to extract. He is reluctant to advise complete tooth extraction with full dentures until

he has explored treatment alternatives with his patients.

Implants are also an important part of Dr. Miller's practice. Since placing his first implant in 1978 (it functioned successfully until the patient's passing in 2004), Dr. Miller's goal has been to simplify implant treatment and make it more affordable. In his 30 years, he has placed nearly 2,000 implants and restored many more. A number of his implant cases have been successfully functioning for nearly 20 years. He has had small-diameter (mini-implants) cases in the mouth since 2001.

## IN-HOUSE DENTURE LABORATORY ALLOWS UNPRECEDENTED MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE ON DENTURES

A successful denture is a product of the care, skill and judgment of the dentist who does the fitting, the laboratory technician's fabrication and the quality of the teeth and materials used in its construction. Consequently, Dr. Miller relies on his own in-office

Lab tech Becky polishing a denture





**LeeAnn, front office receptionist**

denture laboratory to make dentures for his patients. An in-house lab allows him greater quality control and consistency as well as faster turnaround times. His lab can make repairs, modifications or adjustments to dentures, often while the patient waits.

Each set of dentures is unique, and fabricating them involves patient interaction at every step of the process. Consequently, Dr. Miller, his dental technician and the patient act as a team to make decisions about the patient's dentures, thus personalizing the process and resulting in greater patient satisfaction. Since 1977, he has been one of the few dentists in the country to offer a six-month total patient-satisfaction money-back guarantee on all complete, partial and implant dentures. It is a policy that has served Dr. Miller well. Many patients state the dentures he made for them are the best dentures they have ever had.

**Dr. Jeffrey Miller**



**Jackie at the sterilizer**

### **SIMPLE, MORE AFFORDABLE APPROACH APPEALS TO MATURE PATIENTS**

Many of Dr. Miller's patients come to him in "sticker shock" after receiving quotes from dentists who were less in tune with their needs and limitations. Although he diligently educates himself on the latest technology, he believes "there is usually nothing wrong with less sophisticated ways of doing things. Why offer complex, cutting-edge treatment when something uncomplicated and less costly will satisfy their needs?"

He often relies on established techniques in deference to his patients' age and level of acceptance, but Dr. Miller is not averse to the newest treatment technologies. When it is appropriate, he includes state-of-the-art treatments in the options he presents his patients. "The future of dentistry is high-tech, but the emphasis still remains on the skills of the individual dentist," he says. "Technology will not make a mediocre practitioner great. Sometimes the simple approach takes more skill. Still, I keep up on the latest trends and carefully evaluate new techniques and materials in order to better serve my patients."

For over 30 years, Dr. Miller's goal in every area has been to offer the utmost in care and individual attention. He believes dedication results in what he considers one of his greatest honors — other dentists referring their mature parents to him. He considers each patient's wants and needs and offers friendly, affordable service. "My patients keep me honest," he comments. "So many people want to be rock stars of their profession. I'm just grateful to have helped a lot of people. I'm like the family restaurant around the corner. A four-star restaurant is fine for very special occasions, but that familiar neighborhood restaurant is where we go when we just want a good satisfying meal."

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