





PRACTICE PROFILE

Center for Orthodontics
Rancho Mirage, Calif.

Mina Narula, DDS, MDS

When Stars Align

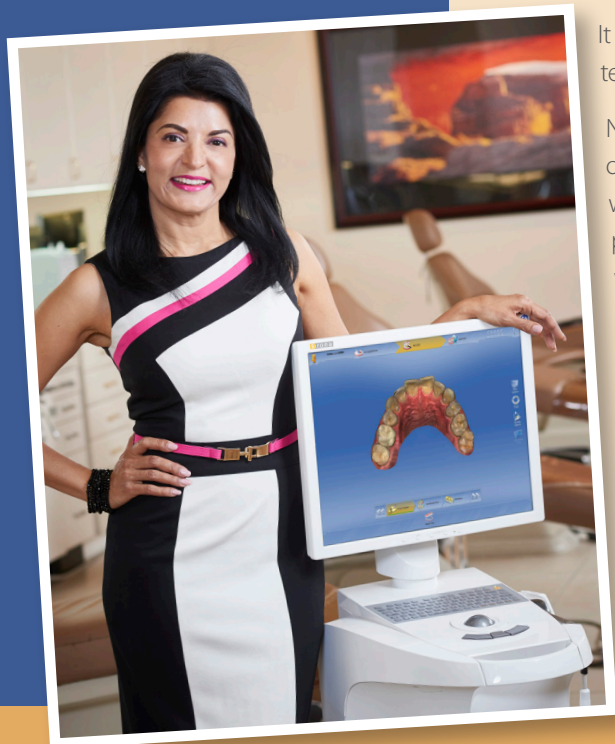
CEREC Ortho complements Dr. Mina Narula's love of orthodontics

It almost seems like the stars were aligned for Mina Narula and CEREC Ortho. If not the stars, the teeth definitely were.

Narula, DDS, has always loved orthodontics. She loved it when she practiced as an orthodontist in her native country, India. She loved it when she emigrated to Boston, and worked as an assistant in an ortho office for three years. And she loved it throughout the process of becoming an orthodontist, again, in the U.S. As Narula puts it: "I was in heaven if I was doing ortho."

After graduating from Tufts University and a fellowship at Harvard University, Narula traded the East Coast for the West, buying a practice in California. Today, she owns the Center for Orthodontics in Rancho Mirage, Calif., and is one of only 400 active members worldwide in the prestigious Edward H. Angle Society of Orthodontists.

Naturally, her love of orthodontics has always accompanied a love of orthodontic technology advancements. CEREC Ortho certainly qualifies. The ortho capabilities of CEREC are still new, but the technology has been a leader in the dental industry for more than 30 years. Narula brought CEREC into her practice last May after learning about its ortho capabilities at the American Association of Orthodontists' 2015 Annual Session. >>





Though the ortho functionality is new, Narula said, the refined technology of CEREC made it an easy addition to her practice. "It's very user-friendly, and the learning curve is simple," she said. "We have six team members that all mastered it in three months. It was instantly a strength of my practice."

So instant, she said, that it has already been introduced as part of the Center for Orthodontics' everyday procedures. Rancho Mirage, located in the larger Palm Springs area, is a well-to-do community with a significant retirement population – which is notable because Narula has an adult patient base that at times is almost half of her case load.

The CEREC Ortho patient experience

With CEREC Ortho, the clinician is guided step by step through the scanning process, with acoustic signals, images and brief explanations to assist along the way. Digital impressions can be created in minutes with the CEREC Omnicam, and the intraoral data can be transferred to Align Technology and used as part of the record submission for an Invisalign® treatment.

Though Narula is an early adopter of CAD/CAM dentistry for orthodontics, she said patients already know what to expect in dental technology. "Personal well-being is very important to this community," she said. "People talk, and they know about what's possible in orthodontics today. When they walk into the practice, they're not shopping; they know what they want. Being able to deliver aligners is huge for me."

Maintaining a high clinical standard has always been important to Narula, who is also a Diplomate of the American Board of Orthodontics and an assistant professor and clinical instructor at Loma Linda University. Her physical impressions were no longer upholding her high standards, and in order for CEREC Ortho to be feasible for her, it needed to be an improvement. "Our first results were amazing, and we never looked back," she said. "I will never take a step back – even if we couldn't scan [with CEREC] for some reason, I would reschedule

rather than taking an impression. That's how much faith and passion I have in using this."

The team at the Center for Orthodontics almost immediately noticed that thanks to the CEREC Omnicam scanner, they weren't having to redo many scans. Its small wand, they found, improved the patient experience on both ends of the patient spectrum. They were able to easily navigate around the smaller areas of young patients' mouths, as well as around the tight spaces in some of their adult patients who already had significant cosmetic work done. "Whether it's a young patient or a patient whose mouth has the presence of a lot of materials, when you have limited stretching capability and a larger wand, they don't like it," she said. "The Omnicam has a thin, small wand, and it's all about patient experience in the end. They don't care that their other procedures are making it difficult for us, they just want us to provide a good experience."

Patients are impressed with the machine and the voice guidance that it provides, Narula said. With technology seeping into all areas of our lives, people expect more, and it's nice to be able to provide it to them.

"I'm very in tune with the trends in orthodontics, and it feels like if you are taking an impression and not a scan, patients think you are not with the times," she said. "Everybody wants instant gratification, and accelerated treatment, and the CEREC helps you deliver that. We are able to deliver a great patient experience along with Invisalign, and that is what patients want."

The CEREC Ortho workflow

CEREC Ortho's user-friendly, patient-friendly workflow allowed Narula and her team to increase efficiency while decreasing clutter. The physical study models that the Center for Orthodontics uses to record a patient's pre-treatment can still be attained when they're needed. Now, though, a digital version could be more easily stored in Dolphin Imaging & Management Solutions, her practice management software. >>



To learn more about Center for Orthodontics,
visit centerfororthodontics.com.



CEREC Ortho has an exclusive integration with Dolphin Imaging software which allows CEREC Omnicam scans to be stored directly in Dolphin 3D for archival, diagnostic and patient education purposes. “When we scan a patient, we take the scan and use it as a study model, and record the patient’s pre-treatment,” Narula said. “Dolphin’s module is able to create a beautiful dental base to the scan and hold the model digitally. Every scan can be made into a study model!”

Even better, CEREC Ortho allows Narula and her team to see a patient and start the case the same day with a scan. Even on days with a packed appointment schedule, they’re able to initiate patient cases. And, since her entire team quickly mastered the scanning process, the entire scan, upper and lower, can be completed in about eight minutes. They upload it to design the same day, and rarely have to bring a patient back in for rescanning.

For Invisalign patients, those scans are the foundation for treatment planning. The scans are used to create the aligners in a different lab, so how well the scans are done determines how well the aligners are made. The results have been beyond impressive, according to Narula. “It just makes so much sense,” she said. “The way I see it, scans will soon be the only way we will do intraoral imaging for the patient.”

Not only does the workflow fit perfectly into Narula’s practice, but so does the technology. When she was choosing CEREC, she factored in its full integration with her Dolphin software. “Dolphin is the backbone of my practice,” she said. “You want everything to be integrated, and CEREC Ortho does that beautifully. [CEREC manufacturer] Sirona is a huge company that does amazing things for dentistry, and I knew that with the seamless integration with Dolphin and my relationship with Patterson, it was the right move.”

Because of her trustworthy Patterson team, Narula knew if she had any problems, she would have support anytime she needed it. Sirona’s support has also been valuable along the way. “Should I have a problem, I knew I would have someone who would go out on a limb to help me. I was convinced of Patterson’s ability to do the right thing,” she said. “That was so important because I already had a good relationship with Patterson, and CEREC came along and made me even more confident in their support.”

Narula’s love of orthodontics has spanned both years and continents. She’s long been a believer in technology and, for her, CEREC Ortho is the next step. Even as an early adopter of the technology, she’s found plenty of resources along the way. And now, she’s found another way to offer something new to her patients.

“I’ve been here now for so long, many of my patients know something about me, and they all know about Invisalign,” she said. “It helps to have something to differentiate yourself, and a good scanner does that. You need a technology that will deliver, and CEREC Ortho does.” **PT**

