

# Forget little shop of horrors

## Gilbert dental office makes drilling feel like pampering

By Edythe Jensen  
The Arizona Republic

**GILBERT** — Kelly Beres settled into the dentist's chair recently wearing warm paraffin skin treatment mittens on her hands and virtual-reality goggles playing *Friends* episodes on her head. The smell of fresh-baked chocolate chip cookies filled the air.

"The last time I was here, I watched *While You Were Sleeping*," Beres, 17, said of her visit to Sheldon Sullivan's office. When she giggled at the funny parts, the dentist paused.

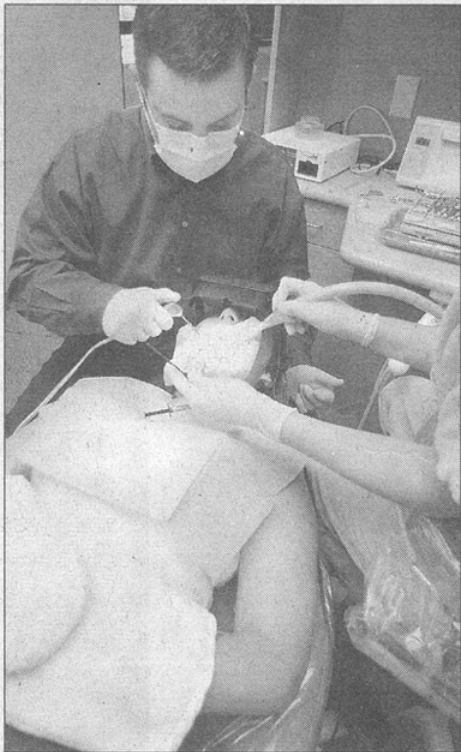
Office manager Jennifer Richey, 39, said Sullivan wants to calm patients' fears by replacing medicinal smells and drill sounds with more pleasant sensory stimuli.

Instead of fluorescent lights and worn magazines, Sullivan's dimly lit enclave of a waiting room has an electric foot massager, scented candles, water sculptures, new-age music, cold bottled water with his name on it, and DVD showings of chimpanzees brushing their teeth. The baking cookie smell is real. Office employees pop dough into a convection oven all day and hand out cookies to departing patients.

"We call it a 'smile lift,'" Sullivan, 35, said of his cosmetic dentistry procedures. "It lasts longer than a face lift."

The price of his work is right up there with plastic surgery. Teeth restorations can cost from \$6,000 to \$40,000 and most are not covered by insurance. Financing is available. Nancy Surdo, 50, flashes a flawless smile in Sullivan's waiting room. "This is the spa of dentistry," she said. "I didn't used to like going to the dentist; this office changed that."

The patient restroom rivals one found in a five-star resort. Individual disposable toothbrushes with single doses of toothpaste, tiny lipsticks and mouthwash are arranged among silk flowers and art-deco lights.



Cori Takemoto Williams/The Arizona Republic

Kelly Beres watches *Friends* and gets a wax treatment on her hands while her dentist, Sheldon Sullivan, works on her teeth.

Beres said her favorite office amenity is the movie library, which has about 100 titles. "The men like *Dumb and Dumber* and *Liar, Liar*," Richey said. "The women like *While You Were Sleeping*."

If the dental work finishes before the movie, the title and stepping point is noted on the patient's chart, Richey said.

There are some movies the office will never offer, Sullivan said. Anything with Hannibal Lector or *Little Shop of Horrors*.