

# SURFACE VALUE

Modern products for the health care industry promote cleanliness and safety while creating a calm environment for patients

BY PAIGE MAGARREY

**PROJECT:  
BLOOR WEST  
DENTAL GROUP**



**THE VERY LOOK** of a typical dental office, with the standard stark palette and harsh lighting, might be enough to make you vow to brush and floss more often – especially when set against a backdrop of flower shops, bars and bakeries on a bustling urban street. However, for the Bloor West Dental Group in Toronto, architect Bruce Stratton, of G. Bruce Stratton Architects and the local interiors firm Southside Design, endeavoured to design an aesthetic more in line with the surroundings than at odds with them.

While the airy treatment rooms display an uncommon warmth – owing to the wood-look Artec floors and the uncluttered equipment stands that delineate space without boxing in patients – the real departure is in the reception area. The usual pristine health care colour scheme is replaced with a warm limestone facade and tempered glass windows that connect the interior with the outside, easing the transition into a place so many dread.

Porcelain tile floors and a custom walnut desk are key elements in the calming palette. Above the desk, a matching feature runs narrow ribs of the same wood along the ceiling and over the windows. Light yellow and red stripes of colour, tucked between the beams, are only revealed when a patient looks up from a waiting room chair. “The back-lit acrylic strips were added to draw positive energy from the street and disperse it into the space,” explains Stratton.

As well as conveying a more relaxed impression, the windows pull light back into the offices and treatment rooms. The one-storey building accommodates a skylight that brings in even more sun. This complements the subtle recessed lighting from Sistemalux, used along the trim and in long strips, along with inset spotlights throughout. “The whole design was about creating a tranquil, comfortable environment,” says Stratton. “What would put me at ease if I walked into the space?”

## SOLID SURFACING AND LAMINATES

By design, non-porous solid surfacing is a go-to for patient rooms and laboratories. The latest innovations combine anti-bacterial properties with curated palettes.

**Arborite** has introduced four new lines of high-pressure laminates: Nuno, Safari, Twill, and Modern Cherry, which includes four wood grain motifs. Blonde, Mocha, Auburn and Arabica are each infused with a spectrum of soothing grey tones, ideal for potentially stressful medical environments. [arborite.com](http://arborite.com)

**EOS Surfaces** has joined forces with Cupron to produce a hygienic, non-porous seamless material that looks just like traditional solid surfacing, but contains copper-infused polymers, whose natural anti-bacterial properties keep microbes at bay. [cupron.eos-surfaces.com](http://cupron.eos-surfaces.com)

**Formica** just launched the Envision system, which enables designers to apply custom images, such as children’s art or murals, onto laminates. Ideal for counters, cabinets and furniture in pediatric wards and patient rooms, it can be paired with Chemtop 2 chemical-resistant surfacing, which inhibits bacterial growth and is easy to clean. [formica.com](http://formica.com)

**Futrus** collaborated with DuPont Corian to develop a line of over-bed tables, bedside cabinets, shelves and IV

stands – as well as award-winning head wall systems – designed to address the cleaning and anti-bacterial requirements of health care environments. Available in more than 100 colours, the non-toxic collection is easy to maintain and Greenguard certified. [futrus.com](http://futrus.com)

**Hi-Macs** Made in the U.S., the new Healthcare Commercial Collection of solid surfacing includes 15 colours selected by Barbara Huelat, former president of the American Academy of Healthcare Interior Designers. With such colours as Serenity blue, Balance brown and Awaken speckled white, the line creates a tranquil space for patients and practitioners alike. [lghimacsusa.com](http://lghimacsusa.com)

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