

Improved moisture control with the rubber dam, a clinical technique

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Abstract

Moisture control with the rubber dam might be improved if Cavit® is placed in those areas where leakage occurs. Application of the Cavit® and the rationale for its use are discussed.*

Introduction

The use of rubber dams has been recommended by many authors. Benefits ascribed to the rubber dam have included moisture control, increased visibility and access, improved tongue and lip control, isolation of medicaments and materials, prevention of aspiration of materials or instruments, and aid in patient management. During our review of the literature, moisture control was the advantage most often cited.¹⁻¹²

Discussion

Control of saliva is vital for at least two reasons: maintenance of a clean field and creation of an optimal environment for manipulation of dental materials, especially amalgam and pit and fissure sealants. While attaining moisture control is often routine and easily accomplished, difficulty is sometimes encountered when a clamp, such as an Ivory #14A, is placed on a partially erupted molar. In this situation, complete elimination of salivary leakage is a problem because of the relationship between the tooth and the long jaws of the clamp. While the long jaws permit the clamp to be stabilized on the tooth, they do not allow

the rubber dam to adapt closely to the buccal or lingual surfaces of the tooth.

Technique

The problem of salivary leakage can be overcome with an easy procedure which takes only a moment to perform, and results have been uniformly successful. After stabilizing the clamp on the partially-erupted tooth, a small amount of Cavit®* was placed, as demonstrated in Figure 1, between the jaws of the clamp and the tooth surfaces where leakage is likely to occur. The Cavit® does not always need to surround the tooth, but if necessary, this can be easily accomplished. After initial placement, to promote a complete seal, the Cavit® should be compressed with a damp cotton roll against the tooth.

The Cavit® should not extend onto the occlusal surface of the tooth. Attention to this detail will insure that the Cavit® does not interfere with visibility, cavity preparation, or instrumentation. Since this material may cover the buccal or lingual surface of the tooth, careful examination for caries on these surfaces must be made.

Removal of the clamp is performed in routine fashion, although it may occasionally be necessary to remove a portion of the Cavit® to gain access to the wing of the clamp. The gingiva should be cleaned in the usual manner.

Conclusion

A method of attaining improved moisture control with the rubber dam has been described. Performed correctly, this operation can provide excellent moisture control even in the difficult circumstances presented by the partially erupted molar.

* Premier Dental Products

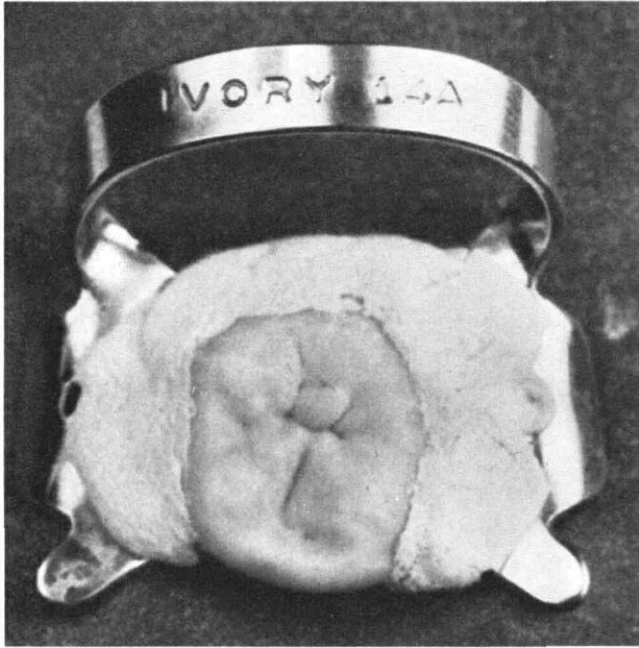


Figure 1

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