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Dentronix Quarterly

Published periodically to keep you informed...

Infection Control Issue

Disinfectants

Sterilization

Monitoring

Features

New 1-Minute Surface Disinfectant

Sterilizer TechTips

A few words from Pete on ...

Fixing what ain't broke.

Let me start by saying that some of my best friends in the orthodontic business are consultants. These individuals with specialized orthodontic expertise can bring tremendous value to a practice by incorporating technology and techniques that are proven difference makers. Doctors of all stripes are often not the greatest of business people, in the same way that baseball pitchers are often not good hitters. Their lifelong professional focus has simply been in a different place." If you don't measure it, you can't manage it". This foundational statement by Peter Drucker is implemented regularly in the clinic to produce predictable outcomes in patients, however can be dismissed in planning positive results with personnel, finances, and office procedures. A consultant can help redirect and refocus on measurable milestones that can truly optimize the potential of an orthodontic practice.

Where consultants can run into problems is when they create an artificial crisis to develop value in their services. "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" is an old colloquialism that hasn't prevented some consultants from aggressively promoting their wares, and since consultants are in the "fixing" business, some have had to grab at straws to create an aura of usefulness. We have had a number of our Dentronix DDS7000 Dry Heat Sterilizer users call us to say that the infection control consultants they hired have told them that using dry heat to process unbagged orthodontic instruments is "illegal". This is, in fact, true in the state of California where in 2011 the State Dental Board revised its infection control guidelines to preclude the processing of unwrapped instruments. Nevada's Dental Board immediately followed, and Massachusetts, where a third party conducts audits of dental offices, gives demerits for processing unpackaged instruments off of a total rating score. Most other states, however, defer to the published CDC Guidelines for Infection Control in Dental Healthcare Settings (2003) for guidance on infection control procedures. This guidance document indeed recommends that heat resistant semi-critical instruments *should* be processed in wrapped packages, but provides an option for "flash" (unpackaged) sterilization as long as instruments are used "immediately or in a short period of time". This same guideline that recommends packaged sterilization for heat resistant items allows



high level disinfection of *heat sensitive* items. This means that plastic cheek retractors, impression trays, mirrors, plier tips, and bite sticks can remain immersed in trays of glutaraldehyde or ortho-phthalaldehyde (OPA) waiting for reuse on patients. Unfortunately, many plastics soak up the chemicals in which they are immersed, and rinsing does not necessarily remove absorbed toxins that can subsequently cause sensitization to patients' soft tissue. Though a totally legal process per the CDC, it is not to the benefit of the practice nor its patients to have many of these types of non-sterilizable items in the operatory.

Some consultants, however, are not well versed in the materials used in orthodontic instrumentation and how these materials respond to various methods of sterilization and disinfection. Their expertise is in *the rules*. This is particularly evident with plier materials. If I was sterilizing stainless steel ligature directors, bracket tweezers, mirrors, handpieces, and metal impression trays, my first choice would be steam autoclave processing. Steam is effective, operates at a lower temperature than dry heat, can process some plastics and dental handpieces, and allows for longer term storage of instruments. Steam, however, has traditionally been contraindicated for instruments

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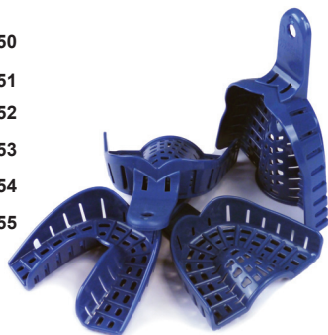
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DSK037

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DSK056

\$299.50 Regular Price

\$269.55 Sale Price

Sterilizer Tech Tips

Andy Gerhart / Senior Sterilizer Repair Technician

The Right Stuff

Here in the **dentronix** repair department we would like to take a moment and inform you about the necessity of choosing a proper cleaning solution for your ultrasonic cleaner. Pliers that have been chrome plated can face significant problems if using an improper solution. Chrome plating places a protective layer over the non-stainless substrate metals. Chrome is impervious to rust, however it is microscopically porous and will allow penetration of corrosive materials over time, deteriorating the substrate from below the coating while leaving the surface plating looking fine.

The use of a neutral pH (pH of 6.5-8.0) cleaning solution is important to the life of your pliers. The closer to 7.0 that you can find the better it will be. Acidic pH cleaning solutions (<6.0) can cause black stains and pitting of the instruments as well as deterioration of tungsten carbides. Alkaline pH solutions (>8.5) can cause brown staining. The pH of dentronix MPUS cleaning solution is around 7.0-8.0 and can help to eliminate these problems. In addition to pH levels, brown stains can also come from cleaning solutions containing phosphates. Use a phosphate-free cleaning solution to avoid problems!

Always try to use a solution that contains a corrosion or rust inhibitor in it. In addition to the rust inhibitor your solution should have a mild lubricant to help keep the plier joint moving freely. This can help the joint from becoming "gummed up" and sticky. If you choose to dry your pliers please be careful to use a towel that is detergent free. The residue from detergents can also stain your pliers.

Dentronix DMP-USP solution comes in a convenient highly concentrated solution. You only need to mix ½ ounce of solution to 1 gallon of water. So, when using the dentronix DDUS 60 or 60R ultrasonic cleaner which contains 4 gallons you will only need 2 ounces of solution to keep your pliers looking like new!



\$55.00/case of 4 bottles
Makes 64 gallons of solution

Fixing what ain't broke...Continued from Page 1

with sharp edges, hinged joints, and non-stainless materials. Many orthodontic pliers in service today still have tips inserted with materials that will rust. Hinges condense steam and can retain moisture, causing potential deterioration of the hinge pin. Cutters of all types will require a much higher degree of maintenance when used with steam sterilization as anecdotal evidence from our repair department indicates. It's easy to say that it is "illegal" to use dry heat systems which protect against instrument damage when you are unaware of the damage that will be caused by switching to steam. Conversely, it's also easy to believe a consultant without question when you paid them a bunch of money to fix your "problems."

We continue to urge dental /orthodontic professionals to become familiar with the rules of their state dental boards when it comes to infection control policies. The CDC guidelines on which most states depend are readily available online and can be used to fact-check third party directives. It is the responsibility of each professional business owner to determine what is safe and effective in their practice and in accordance with applicable regulations. I have no arguments with anyone who chooses steam autoclaving of packaged instruments because they feel it is the right thing to do for their practice and have weighed the extra costs of plier repair and replacement against their infection control objectives. Where I have a problem is when outside influences use scare tactics to drive orthodontic professionals to use infection control processes that can cause serious damage to instruments without explaining the implications. Dry Heat Sterilization is still a viable option for many orthodontists in states that follow the current CDC guidelines. Our DDS-series of dry heat sterilizers are still FDA-cleared medical devices and have value for those that take a practical "breaking-the-chain" approach to infection control. They may not be the right choice for you for a variety of reasons, but unless you practice in California or Nevada, they are not "illegal".

Peter Sildve / Director

The Resident Report

Great Times at GORP 2015

GORP 2015 at St. Louis University was a resounding success. Almost 500 Graduate Orthodontic Residents from all over the USA and Canada came together to learn, network, and socialize. Our congratulations go out to the entire team of residents and staff at SLU for putting together an excellent event. Dentronix has been a long time supporter of GORP and its efforts to bridge the gap between the clinical side and the supply side of orthodontics. The relationships forged at these events have been invaluable in creating the partnerships required to move the profession forward vis-vis new product development and effective implementation of new technologies. Dentronix offers liberal student discounts to residents across America and conducts education programs via webinar and lunch & learn visits. For more information call **1-800-523-5944**.



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