

Are You Swimming In Saliva?

It is nice to have a break in your schedule and get the occasional sealant patient. They are definitely a change of pace from the routine cleanings. Some sealant placements go quickly and some become very challenging. When you are tight on time and want to adhere to your schedule, making sure you have the perfect products for the procedure will help not only yourself but your patient as well. There are so many products on the market that can save you money but making sure that you are also utilizing the right product to get the job done efficiently may be worth its weight in gold. If you are using products just because they are a cheap replacement to the more efficient method, it may just end up costing you more in the long-run.



One product we can really narrow down would be the saliva control product used during sealant placement. Cotton rolls vs. absorbent pads in the buccal mucosa, to be a little more specific. The parotid gland is a wonderful, beautiful gland and when working properly is very useful...just not during sealant placement. Wouldn't it be so nice if we could just turn it off until our procedures are complete? We can use products that would make us think that the gland is turned off. The right absorbent pad would make your life so easy compared to using a cotton roll. The key word is the right absorbent pad. The hard cardboard stiff saliva absorbents are not the products I am referring to. You need to think of the area that is being isolated and fit a product like a key into it. Not only make it seem like there is no gland present, but also shine some light on your tight working situation. I was introduced to the reflective NeoDrys about 2 years ago while temping in an office that used them regularly. Not only did I feel like the field was extremely dry and easy to work in, the product stayed in place and the reflective surface transilluminated the light so I could actually see my working field. I went back to my office and told my boss about the experience and called my product company for samples. He tried them and now it's like our normal. I researched a little more into the product and this is what I found:



The anatomy of the area needs something that conforms to the curvature of the patient's cheek. This product is not so stiff but flexible. It literally fits not only over the source of saliva, but it conforms nicely to the area and is retained there as well during the procedure. When you use a cotton roll it slips and slides all over the place and they always seem to fill with saliva quickly, becoming a slimy roll of cotton that ultimately falls out of place. The whole prep that you just worked on to be perfectly etched for sealant placement gets contaminated. The NeoDrys do not move because they are nicely tucked in close to the mucosa and held in place by the teeth. They also do not leak out of the other side because they have a core that takes in and retains all the saliva. They puff like a pillow evenly and do not leak onto the prep. They also take a while to really fill up, about 15 minutes, giving you plenty of time to place the sealants on the side you are working on and then easily move to the next side without using a ton of product. Typically you would go through 2-3 cotton rolls for one side at least. There is definitely a time and place for cotton rolls, like for lingual saliva control where a roll would be used in the right anatomical space but just not for the buccal arena. After you have ruined sealant preps from bad isolation a couple of times, you can really justify with your time and product loss the use of a good isolation product. These can also be

used in conjunction with the new all-in-one multifunctional cheek retracting, isolating, and suction products.

The bottom line is that there are really nice products out there for all procedures that will make your life a lot less stressful. You can totally justify using them with the production time you will save by doing the procedure right the first time, not having to extend that precious time or your nerves. It is very frustrating to both the hygienist and the patient to start from scratch after you were almost done. Most companies will let you try before you buy their products. Have fun, test products and learn about different ways to make your day easier and you can keep on smiling.