New product delivers non-invasive assistance for implant restorations

By Marc Liechtung, DMD

Most dental professionals have had patients who clearly need restorative treatment yet, for clinical, emotional or financial reasons, are unwilling or unable to immediately undergo the necessary work for permanent restoration. That’s why I created Snap-On Smile®, a multipurpose restorative appliance that is strong yet flexible, has retention that is completely tooth-borne and can be used in a wide range of clinical modalities for temporary relief (including the patient’s aesthetic appearance), in advance of further treatment or as an end product for a cosmetic removable partial denture.

I’ve seen significant value for both patients and periodontists in using the Snap-On Smile appliance with implant restorations, too. The appliance can help shape the pontic space as it offers improved aesthetic appearance and easier hygiene maintenance during a lengthy course of treatment and healing. Here’s an example from my own practice.

A healthy 22-year-old woman was complaining of persistent discomfort in tooth #9. Another dentist performed root canal therapy in an effort to alleviate her discomfort. A Sirona digital intraoral system X-ray revealed she was experiencing internal resorption. It was clear that neither root canal therapy nor a crown would alleviate her discomfort.

Together, the periodontist in my practice and I recommended a treatment plan that included the extraction of tooth 9. The patient wanted to avoid the stigma of wearing a denture, but didn’t want anyone to notice her missing tooth. We assured her the Snap-On Smile appliance could address all of her concerns, could be inserted immediately following the extraction and that she could continue to wear the appliance throughout the entire healing process. She approved the treatment plan.

Several weeks after the initial procedure, the patient returned so we could monitor her healing progress and make plans for placing the implant. The socket was healing beautifully with no signs of impingement, which is often present when the same condition is treated with a traditional acrylic temporary or a flexite flipper. The tissue looked perfect, and she was extremely happy with her smile — so much so that she expressed concern about her post-implant smile looking and feeling as good.

From the periodontist’s perspective, there was concern that the appliance would not offer enough necessary protection to expedite the healing of the implant site and papilla formation.

Following the placement of the implant, it became clear that Snap-On Smile was an extremely valuable interim appliance, completely addressing the concerns of both the patient and the periodontist. Besides allowing the gingiva to heal without impingement, it also is more hygienic, esthetically pleasing and can be made in full arch or quadrant appliances.

The greatest advantage we’ve seen, though, is patients treated with Snap-On Smile are extremely happy and comfortable with the entire process.

Before and after shots of an implant temporary restoration modality.

Dr. Marc Liechtung, inventor of Snap-On Smile®, is a cosmetic and restorative dentist in New York City and the owner of the dental practice Manhattan Dental Arts (MDA), which provides the latest dental techniques and services to its patients. He has been in practice for more than 18 years. In addition to Snap-On Smile, the practice offers services such as dental implants, porcelain laminates, tooth whitening, periodontal treatments, preventive care, crowns and reconstructive bridgework. After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania, he received an advanced restorative and implant fellowship there. He can be reached at (877) 7-SNAPON, (SNAPON (76-2706)) or by e-mail at mliechtung@snaponsmile.com.

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