

The Flexite company originated in 1962 and has set the pace with many innovations that are being used worldwide. Imitation is a form of flattery and we have many imitators.

FLEXIBLE PARTIALS OR CAST THERMOPLASTICS?

I recently received a letter from our distributor in England. A dentist wrote an article which reads, in effect, that flexible partials are ruining dentistry. He said flexible partials are being made by technicians who do not have the basic knowledge of surveying, designing and lacked the knowledge of where to terminate the saddles. He felt they were damaging to the mucosa. Many labs have entered this arena without knowledge of surveying. Technicians who did not have a cast chrome department would funnel their cast partials to a lab specializing in metal castings and therefore lacked this experience. One website, from an imitator company, actually stated that surveying is not necessary as the plastic is so flexible it can be bent to fit over all undercuts. This is outrageous and contrary to all basic rules and logical thinking. I have to agree with this dentist. Currently there is a terrible shortage of technicians specializing in cast removable partials. The imitators are only compounding the problem with inferior plastic restorations. Consequently there are mixed reviews among the dentists.

Every once in awhile a challenging case comes along. Rarely does a case come along that we must refuse. When there is no room for the diatorics, you must refuse the case. Note articulation and space between upper right bicuspids 4&5 and opposing dentition. (Figure I) One of the reasons for the case failing twice was because there was no room to place the teeth.

The dentist agreed to remove the stubbs before proceeding. Please observe anterior view of upper partial. Both cuspids (6 &11) flare out. (Figure II) Some years ago a similar case was presented to me before metal free partials became popular. It was to be made in Vitallium. The dentist wanted an esthetic partial and sent it to two other labs because the patient refused to wear it as presented. We know that it is not possible to produce an esthetic result when the opposing teeth flare out. The survey is too high and there is no way to bring the clasps near the gingival.

But there is a solution **IF** you have a posterior molar for additional support. Note the similarity of both models. (Figure III) By favoring the cuspid that **stands alone** (11) we are able to bring the survey down to the gingival. (Figure IV) This will enable us to make a good retentive and esthetic clasp. We were not concerned with the esthetics on the molar and clasped it according to the survey. What to do with the left cuspid? (6) A short back action clasp engaging the distal buccal area was put on the cuspid. (6) It worked out beautifully to the satisfaction of the patient and dentist. To illustrate this case for my seminars, I made a typodont model and processed a clear flexite partial to simulate the vitallium partial. (Figure V) buccal view & (Figure VI) anterior view. The clasps are barely visible. We will design this partial, which has failed twice, exactly like the clear partial on the typodont model.

The stumps are removed on the model, Figure VII (4 & 5). The model is surveyed and blocked out. Figure VIII illustrates waxup for the left saddle. Note short arm on left cuspid. A single sprue is sufficient. (Figure IX)

The patient was tested by the Clifford institute and found to be allergic to the pigments. She elected to use our unbreakable Flexite Plus which tested perfectly for her. Flexite Plus has some clarity, but is not completely transparent. The following four Pictures show (A) palatal, (B) right , (C) left saddles and (D) anterior view.

Summary:

A difficult partial has been fabricated that incorporates esthetics with retention.

Although we did not use an I or roach clasp on this case, we will not hesitate to use a roach or "I" clasp to achieve maximum esthetics. Our technicians are taught to give priority to the most anterior tooth so the clasp can be near the gingival for maximum esthetics. The same surveying and blockout principles, that are used for Vitallium, is applied to our Flexite thermoplastics. Refer to our Website if you would like to see how we apply the roach type clasp. Imitators only know how to use one clasp for all. (C clasp) Observe their ads.

Many dentists are not aware of the insurance code for the flexible partials. In order to receive the same fee they would receive for metal and acrylic cases they should not refer to the partials as "Flexible". They should use the term "Cast Thermoplastic" when submitting their insurance form.

The process is exactly the same for a cast metal and acrylic partial. The lab fee to the dentist is comparable for a cast thermoplastic partial. Unlike conventional acrylics, cast thermoplastics require sophisticated injection equipment and an investment of several thousand dollars.

The process is exactly the same for a cast metal and a cast thermoplastic.

Chrome

1. Blockout & design.
2. Duplicate model.
3. Pour refractory model (silicate)
4. Copy design on to refractory model.
5. Wax skeleton frame.
6. Sprue.
7. Invest refractory investment in ring.
8. Burn out in oven.
9. Cast metal into ring.
10. Cool down several minutes.
11. Open & sandblast.
12. Finish and polish.

FLEXITE

1. Blockout & design.
2. Duplicate model.
3. Pour Duplicate model. (stone)
4. Copy design on to stone duplicated model.
5. Transfer teeth & wax entire partial.
6. Sprue.
7. Invest stone in injection flask.
8. Boil out & put under heat lamps.
9. Put thermoplastic cartridge into heat chamber. Inject.
10. Cool down several minutes.
11. Remove from flask and put into plaster stone remover.
12. Finish and polish.

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I



II



III



IV



V



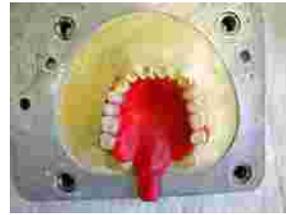
VI



VII



VIII



IX



A



B



C



D