Rethinking provisionals

The many advantages of premade custom temporaries

By Steven Barrett, DDS

As a partner and clinical director of a large private group practice, I often speak of modern dentistry’s esthetic possibilities. Our practice highly prioritizes working with committed laboratories, using quality materials and focusing on predictable processes. BioTemps® Provisionals consistently help our doctors materialize the esthetic vision we create for our patients.

Rethinking provisionals

When working with new dentists, I emphasize that temporaries are as critical to the success of their case as their crown preparations and impression quality. To be successful, cosmetically minded dentists need to visualize esthetic possibilities for patients. If that vision firmly incorporates smile-design fundamentals and highly detailed products and processes, they are setting themselves up for predictable final outcomes.

More than a temporary

After I started using BioTemps Provisionals about 18 years ago, I instantly noticed several things. These custom-made temporaries were far better than any I could make from any acrylic or bis-acryl material. With custom-made BioTemps, I can include esthetic changes, choose custom shades, deliver a much stronger temporary (using fiber or wire reinforcement), reduce chair time and, if refined and trimmed properly, ensure the patient’s soft tissue will be in great shape at the seating appointment. I can also make the arch form more ideal, precisely add or reduce tooth length, create ovate pontics, and even add pink acrylic if needed.

I often do a composite mock-up chairside to help the patient and me visualize the changes that I would like to make. Many dentists often overlook this simple process. Photographs and/or the mock-up study model are then sent to the lab to aid in BioTemps fabrication. And I can even mark the model and simulate potential gingivectomy or crown lengthening sites.

Patient presentation

I detail benefits of BioTemps to patients, emphasizing how vital they are to success. I typically start by explaining the necessity of a custom temporary. Then I show the patient a presentation model with BioTemps and explain how I will customize the shade — and I assure the patient that the temporaries will not discolor.

Due to many patients’ bad experiences with temporary crowns, I want them to know these temporaries are made using a vastly superior process.

Smile makeovers

For cases involving esthetic changes, I explain to the patient how BioTemps allow me to create the best smile possible for them. I use BioTemps as a model for the final restorations, and if needed, I can make changes while the patient is wearing the temporaries. Once the temporaries are exactly as the patient desires, I ask the lab to duplicate them in the final restoration.

Extractions, esthetic emergencies

While BioTemps are a part of my typical extraction treatment plan, convincing patients of post-extraction benefits is not difficult. I explain to them that with BioTemps, they will never have to walk around with a missing tooth or worry that the temporary will break. I will match the temporary color to the natural, surrounding teeth.

For cases in which a patient needs to have an anterior tooth removed immediately, I extract the tooth and make an acrylic temporary chairside. At the end of the appointment, I take impressions to order a custom BioTemps provisional. Ten days later, I replace the chairside acrylic temporary with a BioTemps provisional.

Conclusion

In addition to being ideal for multi-unit esthetic cases, extraction cases or cases involving an entire quadrant, BioTemps work well for single-unit anterior cases. Many of my patients have benefited from a custom anterior temporary because they were public speakers or actors, they were getting married — or they just needed a custom shade for that single tooth. Regardless of your experience level, premade custom temporaries like BioTemps Provisionals can be an integral part of your restorative protocol. Incorporating BioTemps as a transitional tool within your office will lead to predictable results, happy patients and more confidence for your entire team.