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Reversibilidade na técnica restauradora

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The reader accompanying the publications of the (in)direct section could have noticed that I have been sewing a narrative on restorative techniques in composite resins and dental ceramics. It is important to make it clear that the

goal is not to defend one technique over another; on the contrary: the purpose here is to provide comparative information in order to found a conscious clinical decision on the choice of techniques or materials to be used.

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For this purpose, I would like to dedicate this section to the discussion on reversibility – remarkable characteristic of restorative techniques – due to the importance it should have in relation to the decision making in the choice of treatment: composite resins or dental ceramics. Reversibility is understood to be the ability to return something to its initial state.

This concept should be valued and highly desirable in some treatment protocols, such as aesthetic procedures in young patients.

In this case, the patient's age should be taken into account, since if the patient has not yet completed their growth cycle, it is common for the teeth to move and the treatment needs to be redone. Another point to consider is the number of times the procedure will need to be repeated, depending on the clinical longevity of the material, because even dental ceramics, which have considerable longevity, need to be changed three or four times over the life of a patient who received still young aesthetic restorations in their teeth. For this reason, one should choose a treatment that, besides not wearing the dental structure, is reversible.

Another case in which a reversible treatment should be indicated concerns patients who have just removed their orthodontic appliance. In these cases, it is quite common that there are still small movements to accommodate the occlusion in the first months after the end of the orthodontic treatment. Still, there are situations in which the anterior alignment of the teeth by orthodontics would be the most recommended, but the patient prefers not to use orthodontic appliances at that moment. In this case, a reversible technique should be indicated, due to the possibility of a subsequent change of opinion on the part of the patient.

An important point to be considered is the case of patients who are unsure about the desired aesthetic result, this because many times meeting the patient's expectations is a great challenge, and it is common in clinical practice that insecure patients want to go back and undo the aesthetic treatment.

These are routine circumstances in our clinical practice, and it is important to identify individually each patient's needs by prescribing an aesthetic restorative treatment that meets their expectations, but can at the same time be reversed. It is important to emphasize that, whenever there is any treatment insecurity or resistance by the patient, reversibility should be prioritized.

Composite resins, due to their characteristics, allow the wear of the material without damaging the dental element, thus, it is possible to modify the shape and color of the teeth as many times as necessary, which allows a cyclic relationship between a healthy tooth and a restored one. An irreversible technique, in turn, does not establish such a relationship, which causes that, at each exchange of restoration, the healthy structure be eroded.

Dental ceramics are one of the esthetic restorative techniques that allow minimal or almost non-existent dental wear, which makes it an excellent alternative, producing excellent results, if well-referred and performed. However, after cementing the ceramics, their removal – although possible – supposes the wear of the underlying dental structure, being impossible for the restored tooth to return to its initial intact state, which makes it an irreversible restorative technique.

In view of this prerogative, composite resins are an important alternative when one wishes to aesthetically restore the teeth without



dental wear. Although it requires technical control and understanding of color and shape, it is an option capable of producing excellent results, allaying to the treatment their material

characteristics, which allows the mechanical removal of composite resins without damaging the underlying tooth, therefore, a reversible restorative technique.

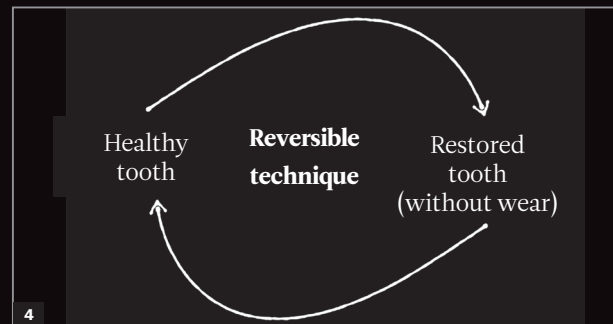


3A



3B

Figure 1: Patient with teeth restored with composite resins, 11 years ago. **Figure 2:** Patient with healthy teeth after the procedure of removal of composite resin restorations, due to selective wear: note that the dental enamel was in perfect condition, because it was not worn at the time of this restoration; because this was a reversible technique, its removal was allowed without any damage to the underlying dental structure. **Figure 3:** Patient with dental contact lenses cemented to the teeth. Even if there is no dental wear, after cementation the treatment becomes irreversible and the cyclic flow (healthy tooth, restored tooth) becomes linear, since there will always be dental wear when removing the adhered ceramic pieces. **Figure 4:** Schematic representation of a reversible dental treatment: the cyclic character is established between restored tooth and healthy tooth without restoration, since the removal of the restorative material does not cause damage to the dental element; replacement of reversible restorations can happen several times. **Figure 5:** Schematic representation of an irreversible treatment: observe the linear and progressive character regarding the increasing wear of dental structure at each exchange of restorative material; in this case, the replacements of the restorations happen in reduced number of times, limited to the dental remnant.



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CONCLUSION

The reversibility of an aesthetic restorative technique should always be considered as an important point in clinical decision-making.