Gagster: A New Technique for Maxillary Impression without Gagging

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ABSTRACT

Gagging during maxillary impression procedures is a patient reflex considered normal, often encountered by orthodontists. In the maxillary impression making technique described the commonly available plastic food grade wraps are used and have been named as Gagster. It helps to reduce the posterior flow of impression material and also prevents accidental aspiration.

Keywords: Gagster, Gag reflex, Maxillary impression.


INTRODUCTION

Gagging is a normal protective reflex to prevent foreign bodies entering the trachea. Five intraoral areas are known to be ‘trigger zones’—palatoglossal and palatopharyngeal folds, base of tongue, palate, uvula and posterior pharyngeal wall. Poor impression technique may elicit the gag reflex in patients not normally susceptible to gagging, for example, an overloaded impression tray. Although there are many reasons for a gag reflex, often orthodontists encounter those of psychogenic origin even after all precautions are taken.

PROCEDURE

1. Adequate sized orthodontic impression tray is chosen.
2. The plastic food wrap is cut to a 6 × 4 inch piece. The size can be changed according to personal judgment.
3. An adequate amount of impression material is loaded on the selected tray. The authors recommend use of slow setting impression material which would give time to place the plastic food wrap over the impression material. It would also assure a good impression in the first attempt, since there is more time for manipulation in the mouth, thus avoiding a second try as these patients are usually quite anxious. It would also build their confidence with the Orthodontist during the initial visits itself.
4. The posterior half of the loaded impression tray is centered and placed over the length of the plastic food wrap (Figs 1A to E). The plastic food wrap is then loosely folded so as to extend only over the distal end of the impression material and approximated onto the impression material. Now the plastic food wrap extending lateral to the impression tray is also loosely...
folded and approximated under the tray. All folds are done loosely so as to allow adequate flow of the impression material.
5. The impression is then made, plastic food wrap peeled away, cleaned, disinfected and dental stone is poured to make a study cast (Fig. 2).

**DISCUSSION**

The thin plastic food wrap when approximated on itself under the impression tray sticks together forming a barrier allowing the impression material to flow more into the sulcus than posteriorly (Figs 3A to C). As in normal impressions, placement of the impression tray is important but with the plastic food wrap in place there is no risk of the impression material flowing posteriorly and it also helps in directing the flow anteriorly.

From our experience, it will take just a few impressions to getting the timing right for placing and folding the plastic food wrap onto the impression tray. Air bubbles getting locked while folding the plastic food wrap was one of the initial problems which can be easily be overcome. The plastic food wrap may be removed before pouring the dental stone. Even though the flow of material at the distal end varies with each impression, all landmarks are recorded (Fig. 2).

In Gagster technique, a commonly available inexpensive food grade plastic wrap is used with no extra time spent for this technique. It’s just a quick modification after loading the impression tray. But, the patient is relaxed (Fig. 4), improving the patient-doctor relationship right from the first visit.

Gagging and accidental aspiration can be prevented by Gagster technique for maxillary impressions. It would be very helpful when making impressions of young cleft palate patients where plastic food wraps can be placed where flow of impression material needs to be restricted to prevent aspiration.
REFERENCES


Retraction Notice

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Authors: Seyed Mohammadreza Safavi, Farnaz Younessian, Sarvraj Kohli
Issue: October-December 2013 Volume 47 Number 4 (Supplement I)

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